

ANIMATION

WORLD

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MAGAZINE

October 1998

Independent Filmmakers and Commercials

Balancing Commercials
& Personal Work

William Kentridge

Italy's Indy Scene

U.K. Opps for
Independents

Max and His Special Problem

Plus: The Budweiser Frogs
& Lizards, Barry Purves and Glenn Vilppu

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Cover: © Nickelodeon. Dave Wasson's *Max & His Special Problem* is reviewed in this issue. Wasson, a 1990 Cal Arts graduate, has established himself as both a successful commercial director and an independent filmmaker. Fate (and Fred Seibert) brought together the best of both worlds when his short film, *Max & His Special Problem*, already in progress as an independent project, was picked up by Nickelodeon to be produced as part of the *Oh Yeah! Cartoons!* program. Wasson is currently working on several more *Oh Yeah! Cartoons!* such as *Max and the Pigeon Incident*, *Jack and the Beatstalk* and *Hamzel and Grandé*.



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

The inventiveness of independents...

One thing has become clear while working on this issue. In order to be independent, one must not only have the ability to be amazingly creative in an artistic sense but also in an entrepreneurial sense. Independents are being forced to be more creative in the financing of their visions as funding from various sources becomes more scarce. In this world it isn't enough to have a unique vision and execute it, you first have to find a way to finance it.

Independent filmmakers worldwide work on commercials, music videos, CD-Roms, you name it, in order to raise funds. We see in Andrea Martignoni's "Italian Independent Animators," Marie Beardmore's "Eating and Animating: Balancing the Basics for U.K. Independents," and the survey "Balancing Commercials and Personal Work: Three Directors Speak," how independents utilize commercial work to support their own projects. Once again, a magazine issue of seemingly polar opposites has come full circle. It is ironic that quite a few independent film makers create advertisements for companies and their products in order to do "their own thing." It takes conviction and drive for anyone to make a film. However, when funding, equipment and facilities are low it takes even more. I think we'd all like to thank these often uncelebrated

people who work for hours in their garages, basements and kitchens on personal wonders. It is too sad that often the only place to see these pieces is at animation festivals, the cornerstones of artistic animation. If these filmmakers only knew how grateful we were for all those times we sat in the dark, with goose bumps, because of their tenacity, diligence and vision.

The other big newz in this issue is Antz, DreamWorks Pictures and PDI's first and much awaited animated feature film. This film kicks off the first of four major animated theatrical features being released from now through the end of the year. The other three are naturally, The Rugrats Movie, A Bug's Life and The Prince of Egypt. As was the case with Anastasia, everyone is waiting to see Antz and make a verdict, not only about DreamWorks and PDI's bid at the animation big time, but also the fate of feature animation units as a whole. I find it interesting that while the technique is as far away from traditional cels as possible, the story still revolves around a princess! Granted she isn't in a castle, etc, but I guess some old traditions and habits are hard to break. Still I think we are all ready to see the animated feature break away from the typical fairy tale mold and Antz is well on the way to doing just that. Animation as a filmmaking technique should not deter-



mine the content of the story. Imagine if live-action films could only be one genre! If these four animated films succeed individually based on originality and story, then there is hope for us all. I think it will be wonderful to break the animated feature out of the typical Disney mold and into some fresh ideas. Animation prides itself on being a medium where anything can happen. So come on folks, make anything happen!

Until Next Time,
Heather

Joe Bev is Tooned-In

Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the article "Tooning in the 1998 Fall Season" (Bevilacqua 3.6), which described the upcoming season of new cartoons, by Joe Bevilacqua on AWN. With a four-year-old son who loves cartoons, it helped me to identify which shows were most appropriate and would be most beneficial and educational for him—and also to know which ones I might want to avoid.

Mr. Bevilacqua obviously knows his stuff.

Regards,
Gina Hogan

In Memory of Dusan Vukotic

Thank you for publishing the text on the passing of Dusan Vukotic (News 3.5). However, please allow me to correct some of the information that was obviously given by incompetent sources or people. I am one of the pioneers of Zagreb animation from the very beginning in 1950, and was Vukotic's colleague and close friend for the past fifty years.

Dusan Vukotic was a great artist, so it's not necessary to magnify his role in Croatian (Yugoslav) animation. He was never the "former head of the animation unit of Duga Film." He started learning animation at Duga Film in 1951, and made his first films there in

1952. Duga Film was founded in 1951, after the first professional Croatian/Yugoslav film *The Great Meeting* was made by the brothers Neugebauer and a group of colleagues/cartoonists from the humorous magazine *Kerempuh*. Vukotic joined us at Duga Film, along with all the other artists who wanted to try making animation as a new art.

Duga Film was not "known as the Zagreb Animation Studio," because it existed for only one year (1951-1952) and was virtually unknown abroad. It was Zagreb Film, founded later (1956), that was known as "the famous Zagreb 'school of animation.'" Vukotic was exceptionally important in the founding of the animation studio within Zagreb Film, where the so called Zagreb school of animation originated after 1957.

With regards,
Borivoj Dovnikovic Bordo

From the Editors: We apologize for the incorrect information that was published. We took our information from well-respected printed historical sources. However, this goes to show that there isn't anything like first-hand information from the people who were there. Thank you.

More Info on Fantasia

I was very interested in

Charles Solomon's "An Afternoon with Ollie Johnston, Frank Thomas and Pinocchio" (Solomon 3.4) by the portion of the article where he spoke about Walt's love of *Fantasia* and what he would have wanted to do with it in the future as a continuing film. Mr. Solomon mentioned that Disney and animation itself would be extremely different today if Walt had been able to continue reworking *Fantasia*.

I'd like to know what Mr. Solomon's continued thoughts on the subject are. What differences would we see if Walt was able to continue on *Fantasia*? Has he already published more on these thoughts elsewhere?

Sincerely,
Danny Keller

Charles Solomon responds:

Thank you for your comments. What if *Fantasia* had been as successful as *Snow White* is one of the great "what-ifs" of American animation history. I've written about it in a couple of *Los Angeles Times* articles and in two of my books, *Enchanted Drawings: The History of Animation* and *The Disney That Never Was*. John Cane-maker has also written on this subject. I'm not sure where Frank's comments have appeared. However, the consensus is that if the film had succeeded, the entire subsequent history of the medium

would be different. Walt would have been able to continue experimenting in styles, technology, multi-media, etc., which would have kept him interested in animation. He might have gone into television and the amusement parks as well, but he certainly would have expanded the medium in ways we probably can't imagine, instead of returning to the fairy tale formula that soon bored him.

I hope this proves helpful.

Charles Solomon

Home Studio Info

Thanks Michelle Klein-Häss for your article "Small Studio/Home Studio: An Overview of Low-End Computer Aided Animation Choices" (Klein-Häss 3.5). In the passage about punching your own paper, you mention, and rightly so, the difference an animator will experience going from 12-field to letter-size paper. However, there is another option.

Instead of buying 8.5" x 11" paper, you could pick up and punch a ream of 11" x 17." If you like, you can use it at its full size (which is actually pretty close to 16-field), or take it to your local Kinko's copy center and have them trim it to 12.5" so it more closely approximates 12-field paper. The paper is usually a little thicker than the bargain brand letter size and slightly more expensive, but it's usually better quality.

And when it comes to punches, you don't necessarily need an Acme punch, if you're working solo and don't mind doing a little setup work. In the past, I've rigged up a perfectly ser-

viceable pegging system with a standard 3 hole punch and some plastic dowel. Let me know if you'd like the details. It's a little involved, but beats spending \$400 on an Acme. Plus, it's more stable than using a 2-hole punch.

Thank you again,
Paul

Michelle Klein-Häss responds:

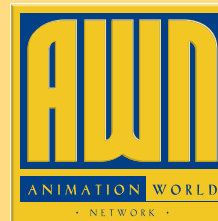
The difficulty I was telling people about is that the standard scanner is usually 8.5" to 9" wide, which is insufficient space for 12-field paper.

Since I wrote the article, however, there is a *new* oversized scanner out from Plustek which is less than \$300. The model is the OpticPro A3-1 and it has a 12" x 17" scanning area... more than enough for a 12-field area. I am not sure whether this is a SCSI scanner, and can be used cross-platform, or a Parallel Port scanner which can only be used with PCs, but it is available through PC Zone in Seattle, WA.

Another thing is that with the intelligent use of a custom field guide under your work blocking out your 8.5" x 11" "window," you can use standard 12-field paper in a pinch. The working area winds up being a little smaller than the drawing area constraints for TV.

It would make perfect sense to use a 3-hole punch. A good 3-hole punch can be had for about \$11 at Staples or Office Depot...and this is for the kind with an offset lever that doesn't even strain the hands.

Hope this clarifies things.
Michelle



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Dig This!

Rebecca Moses Brings Animation Into Fashion

by Wendy Jackson

The fast-paced world of international fashion is an unlikely place to find animation. But fashion designer Rebecca Moses has challenged that notion by using animation to showcase her designs.

Moses, an American-born, Milan-based designer of luxury apparel (her clothes sell for U.S. \$700 and up), developed the idea of animating her drawings while working on a collection inspired by India. At the encouragement of her sister, Deborah Moses and her company Moses Media, as well as Nick and Gretchen van der Grinten of Detour Design, both based in New York, Rebecca designed characters which could be animated. Rebecca's designs were brought to life in the form of a colorful, playful and truly unique film titled *The Discovery of India*.

Rebecca's colored sketches--about 20 in all--were drawn on scraps of paper, complete with backgrounds. At Detour, the art was then scanned and colored in Photoshop, where the backgrounds were separated and the characters split into pieces and transformed into cut-out-like puppets, then animated as such with Adobe After Effects. The project was a challenge for Detour, a small design studio that mainly focuses on print media and broadcast design, for which the most animation is often moving type.

But, said Nick van der Grinten, their approach was "deliberately un-sophisticated," which facilitated their production schedule: less than one month!

The completed three-and-a-half-minute animation was first screened as a surprise introduction to Rebecca Moses' Spring '98 Collection, before the models hit the runway, at a show for the industry and media. "The fashion world is way too serious," said Deborah Moses, "I think this woke them up. It takes a lot of courage in this business to take chances and risks, and to incorporate a sense of humor."

For her next Spring Collection show, Rebecca designed a pop-up invitation, and a mural installation featuring 3D props made from her drawings. She would like to use animation again, but has no definite plans to do so yet.

The on-line version of this article includes a Quicktime movie of Rebecca Moses' animated fashion

show, *The Discovery of India*.
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7digthis.html>



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Wendy Jackson is associate editor of *Animation World Magazine*.

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© Rebecca Moses.

William Kentridge: Quite the Opposite of Cartoons

by Philippe Moins

Johannesburg, the end of the 20th Century.

Soho Eckstein is a fat person; some kind of real-estate magnate. With his striped suits and pudgy features, you would place him somewhere between Bolshe-

sacred body dedicated all of its life to this substitute for sex.

In each short animation, Felix Teitelbaum progressively resembles his creator William Kentridge more and more, like those self-portraits from the Renaissance in which the artist depicts himself

tion (bakelite telephones, megaphones, and stadium-style loudspeakers) and measuring instruments (theodolites and sextants) signaling unknown shores, the heroes of this animated drawing evolve—and the term animated drawings can be taken in its most literal sense.

In contrast to the first episodes in which Soho and apartheid absolutely rule, where everything is either good or bad, black and white, as judged by our western viewpoint, a more subtle, moving and sincere point of view followed, culminating with *Felix in Exile*, *History of the Main Complaint*, and *Weighing and Wanting*.

The uncertainty of the times and the relationships between people is mirrored in the landscape and figures which are rendered in black, sometimes soft, sometimes hesitant, charcoal, drawn mostly in shadows and sketches rather than with well-defined details.

The Impossible Innocence

This animated fresco, patiently constructed over the years in the form of seven short animation films, unfolded from 1989 to the present. It is the work of William Kentridge. This South African artist recently came to Brussels to present two events: a production of the Monteverdi opera *The Return Of Ulysses* at the Festival of Arts, and an important exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, which will tour through the



William Kentridge. Photo courtesy of William Kentridge.

vik caricatures of capitalists and the expressionist images of the Weimar Republic.

Felix Teitelbaum we only see from the back—to begin with at least. Passive and dreamy, he's around for the rise of Soho Eckstein, and again for his downfall, which is the only time we see Soho in a more humane light. Around them, South Africa, confiscated by the whites, breaks free. Felix only becomes active when he deceives Soho by having an affair with Sarah Eckstein, the entrepreneur's wife. Even then, only his tongue is active, as if his

in one corner of the picture. However, there is also something of Kentridge in Soho Eckstein, this privileged white man who thinks that nothing can resist him, and builds massive monuments to his own work.

William Kentridge feels at home in this town of Johannesburg where he creates these works impregnated by the situation...

In a universe of devastated landscapes, wounded bodies, and out-dated means of communica-

end of the year to Munich, Germany and Graz, Austria. A theme running through all of his work is his peculiar way of representing South Africa. He does not dwell on the picturesque or humanitarian elements of the country. He doesn't even take a militant stance, even though his career is that of a white progressive intellectual, with a certain iconography common to the politically engaged artist. Rather William Kentridge feels at home in this town of Johannesburg where he creates these works impregnated by the situation of his homeland, its history and its contradictions.

What interests Kentridge is Time; its passing, the traces it leaves, the memory that events, beings and objects leave when we close our eyes on our past.

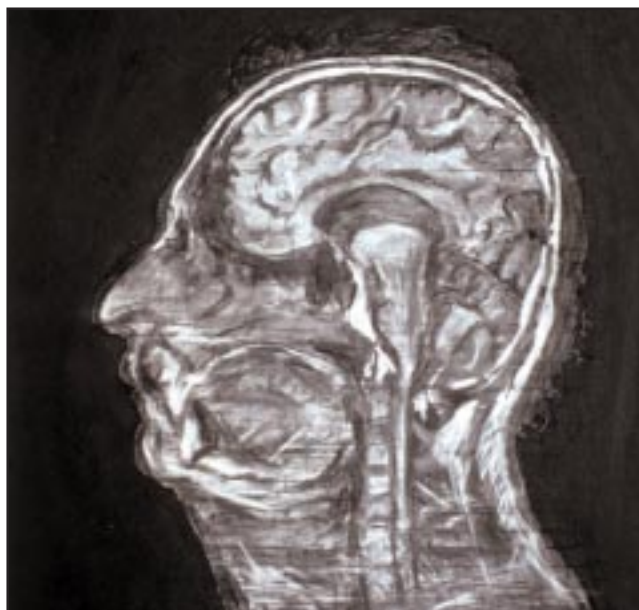
Kentridge has said, "I haven't been successful in escaping from Johannesburg. The four houses that I have lived in, my school, my studio, have all been less than two miles from each other. And in the end, all my work is rooted in this rather desperate provincial city. I have never tried to make illustrations of apartheid, but the drawings and films are certainly spawned by and feed off the brutalized society left in its wake. I am interested in a political art, that is to say an art of ambiguity, contradiction, uncompleted gestures and uncertain endings. An art (and a politics) in which optimism is kept in check and nihilism at bay." ¹

His films are often

desperate, but always poetic; one can see this best when he evokes visions of a state of grace, a doorway to paradise that can make one forget the realities and horrors. Kentridge once explained, "Certain artists, from Matisse to the lyrical abstract painters, have been successful in preserving a sort of innocence or blindness and continuing to work like that in our times, without bad faith gnawing at their work. I'd love to be able to work like them, but it's not possible." ²

Animation as Process

Why did this fine-artist painter, draughtsman and engraver decide to dedicate so much energy to animated film? The answer lies in *Memo*, one of his earliest attempts at film, which mixed pixillation with drawn animation. What interests Kentridge is Time; its passing, the traces it leaves, the memory that events, beings and objects leave when we close our eyes on our past. What technique besides frame-by-frame could better render an account of this phenomena?



Weighing and Wanting. © William Kentridge.

In order to do this, Kentridge gradually refined a personal animation technique. Each of his short films is based on a series of some 20 to 40 charcoal drawings, mostly in large sizes with some enhancements in pastels. In a desire for a chromatic simplicity with symbolic values, only colors, such as blue to represent water, and red, are used, glaring against the subtlety of gray.

William Kentridge is a perfect autodidact of animation, something that reinforces the fragile, precarious side of his creations.

Each of these drawings is like a storyboard sketch, often filmed with no camera moves. Kentridge modifies his composition little by little between each frame shot by erasing certain parts and re-drawing them. The charcoal technique, ephemeral and volatile, lends itself to this treatment, particularly in that faint traces remain of the imagery that has been erased. The result on screen gives a rather fragile image, all in nuances, quite in the manner of a man obsessed by the idea of traces, of reminiscences. Unconcerned with traditional animation techniques, not even filming with a true animation stand, William Kentridge is a perfect autodidact of animation, a fact that reinforces the fragile, precarious side of his creations. It also permits him to reinvent, with all sincerity, techniques discovered by the first animators at the beginning of this century. In this sense, animation is only a process of unveiling the act of drawing, and can become

a part of a greater whole. One can sometimes see his hand or his entire body appear in certain films. In his films, he acts almost like a stage manager, integrated into his films as he directs the combining of sets, giant puppets, actors and manipulators (*Faust in Africa!*, *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, and the very recent opera *The Return of Ulysses*). Rather than using the term 'animated cartoon,' with its connotations of entertainment, he prefers to use the term 'drawings for projection' to describe his work.

Rather than using the term 'animated cartoon,' with its connotations of entertainment, he prefers to use the term 'drawings for projection' to describe his work.

By integrating these diverse processes, Kentridge's films really attain their full expression only in the theatre, or in installations like those he presented in his museum exhibit. The impact of the true



Felix in Exile. © William Kentridge.

scale of his large formats is perceptible here, in the company of the films and works specially created for these circumstances. The originals of his drawings for projection, these large charcoals, the last steps of an animation process before a camera, exude a different force, which gives one a fresh appreciation for the films of which these drawings are apart. Outside the world of contemporary art and the great centers of theatrical creation, William Kentridge has succeeded in both of these arenas paradoxically by being invited in the same year (1997) to the prestigious Documenta Art Exhibition in Kassel and the prestigious Theatre Festival in Avignon. His unique use of animation has certainly played a part in this double honor, which is late in coming from the world animation

community itself.

The William Kentridge Exhibition will be in Germany until October 11, 1998, at Kunstverein, Munich. It will then be in Austria from November 15, 1998 to January 15, 1999, at the New Gallery Graz at the Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz.

¹ Michael Goldby, William Kentridge, Painter, *Revue Noire* No. 11, December 1993, January/February 1994, pp. 20-23

² Caroline Bakargiev-Christov, William Kentridge (exhibition catalogue) Palais des Beaux Arts, Bruxelles, 1998

The on-line version of this article includes a Quicktime movie from *6 Soho Eckstein* by William Kentridge.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7moinskentridge.html>

Translated from French by William Moritz.

Philippe Moins is co-director of the Animation Festival of Brussels, for which he organized one of the first retrospectives of William Kentridge at any animation festival. He is the regular animation reporter for the daily Belgian newspaper Le Matin (The Morning Paper).

Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.



Faustus in Africa! © William Kentridge.

William Kentridge, aux antipodes du cartoon

par Philippe Moins

Johannesburg, fin du vingtième siècle.

Soho Eckstein est un personnage adipeux, sorte de mag-nat de l'immobilier. Avec ses costumes rayés et ses traits épaissis, on le situerait à mi chemin entre les caricatures bolchéviques représentant les suppôts du Capital et des figurations expressionnistes de la république de Weimar. Felix Teitelbaum, on ne le voit pratiquement que de dos, au départ du moins. Passif et rêveur, il assiste à l'as-cension de Soho Eckstein, puis à sa déchéance qui corre-

spond à son humanisation. Autour d'eux, l'Afrique du Sud confisquée par les blancs se délite. Felix ne devient actif que lorsqu'il trompe Soho avec Sarah Eckstein, l'épouse de l'entrepreneur et même alors seule sa langue s'active, comme si son corps hiératique déléguait toute vie à un substitut de son sexe.

Dans chaque court métrage, Felix Teitelbaum ressemble davantage à son créateur William Kentridge, il rappelle ces autoportraits de la Renaissance, quand l'artiste se représentait dans

un coin du tableau. Mais il y a aussi quelque chose de Kentridge dans Soho Eckstein, ce blanc privilégié qui pense que rien ne lui résiste et fait construire de monstrueux monuments au travail. Dans un univers de paysages dévastés, de corps lacérés, de moyens de communication désuets (téléphones en bakélite, porte voix, hauts parleurs style "les



William Kentridge.

dieux du stade") et d'instruments de mesure (théodolite, sextants,...) balisé par on ne sait quelles cotes, évoluent les héros de ces "dessins animés", ce mot devant être pris dans son sens le plus littéral.

Aux contrastes jugés manichéens (selon notre regard d'occidentaux) des premiers épisodes (lorsque Soho et l'apartheid règnent sans partage) succède une vision plus subtile, émouvante et sincère qui culmine avec *Felix in Exile*, *History of the Main Complaint* et *Weighing and Wanting*.

A l'incertitude des temps et des relations entre les person-nages répond le paysage et la forme, faite de noirs parfois flous, parfois hésitants, technique du fusain qui procède autant par ombres et par traces que par traits affirmés.

L'impossible innocence

Cette fresque animée, patiemment bâtie au fil des ans sous la forme de sept courts métrages d'animation, s'échelonne de 89 à aujourd'hui. Elle est l'oeuvre de William Kentridge. Cet artiste sud africain vient de présenter à Bruxelles à la fois un spectacle au Kunsten Festival des arts (*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse*, opéra de Monteverdi) et une importante exposition au Palais des Beaux-Arts qui circule à la fin de cette année en Allemagne (Munich) et en Autriche (Graz). En filigrane de toute son oeuvre,

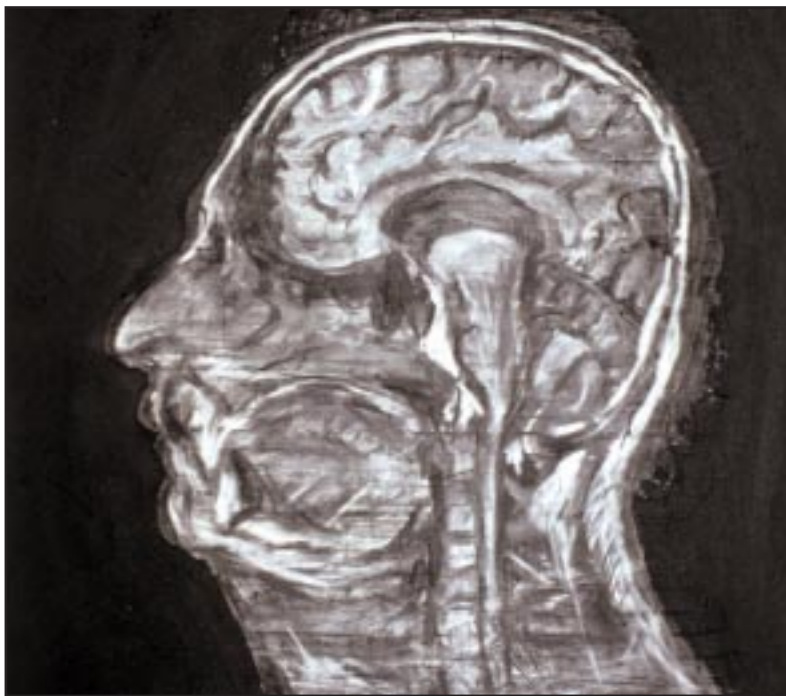
c'est une Afrique du Sud singulière, éloignée de tout pittoresque, fût-il humanitaire qu'il donne à voir. Non par volonté militante, même si le parcours de Kentridge est celui d'un intellectuel progressiste blanc, avec une certaine iconographie commune aux artistes "engagés", mais parce que William Kentridge se sent chez lui dans cette ville de Johannesburg où il crée des oeuvres imprégnées par la situation de son pays, son histoire, ses contradictions: "Je n'ai pas réussi à m'échapper de Johannesburg. Les quatre maisons que

j'ai habité, mon école, mon atelier, ont tous été dans un rayon de trois kilomètres. Et finalement, tout mon travail est ancré sur cette ville provinciale et plutôt désespérante. Je n'ai jamais essayé de faire une illustration de l'apartheid, mais les dessins et les films sont engendrés et nourris de cette société brutalisée, laissée pour compte. Je m'intéresse à un art politique, c'est à dire un art d'ambiguïté, de contradiction, aux démarches non abouties et aux finalités incertaines. Un art (et un politique) où l'optimisme est maintenu en échec et le nihilisme aux abois." 1

Conception souvent désespérée, toujours poétique, dont il révèle en creux les fondements lorsqu'il évoque les visions d'un état de grâce, d'une accession au paradis qui peut faire oublier les réalités et leurs horreurs : "Certains artistes, de Matisse aux peintres abstraits lyriques, ont réussi à conserver une sorte d'innocence ou d'aveuglement et continuent à travailler ainsi de nos jours, sans que la mauvaise foi ronge leur oeuvre. J'aimerais être capable de travailler comme eux. Mais ce n'est pas possible." 2

L'animation comme processus

Pourquoi ce dessinateur, peintre et graveur, a-t-il un jour décidé de consacrer autant d'énergie à des films d'animation? La réponse est dans *Memo*, un de ses essais déjà anciens, mélangeant pixillation et dessins animés: Ce



Weighing and Wanting. © William Kentridge.

qui intéresse Kentridge, c'est le temps, son défilement, la trace qu'il laisse, le souvenir que les événements, les êtres et les choses laissent quand nous fermons les yeux sur notre passé. Quelle technique autre que l'image par image pouvait mieux rendre compte du phénomène?

Pour ce faire, Kentridge a petit à petit affiné une technique d'animation personnelle. Chacun de ses courts métrages est basé sur une série de vingt à quarante dessins au fusain, généralement de grand format, rehaussés de pastels. Seules couleurs, le bleu figurant l'eau et le rouge sont utilisés, dans une volonté de simplicité chromatique à valeur symbolique, tranchant avec la subtilité des gris.

Chaque dessin est une sorte de plan séquence, au cadrage souvent immuable. Kentridge modifie petit à petit sa composition entre chaque prise en effaçant certaines parties pour les redessiner. La technique du fusain, éphémère et volatile, se prête bien

à cette démarche, avec ceci de particulier qu'elle laisse subsister des traces de ce qui a été effacé. Le résultat à l'écran donne une image un peu fragile, tout en nuances, bien dans la manière d'un homme obsédé par l'idée de la trace, de la réminiscence. Se jouant des techniques d'animation traditionnelles, filmant avec ce qui n'est même pas un vrai "banc titre", William Kentridge est un parfait autodidacte du cinéma d'animation, ce qui

renforce le côté fragile et précaire de ses créations. Ce qui lui permet aussi de réinventer en toute sincérité des procédés éprouvés jadis par les premiers animateurs, au début du siècle. En ce sens, l'animation n'est qu'un processus de dévoilement de l'acte de dessiner et peut faire partie d'un tout plus vaste. Ainsi voit-on sa main, voire sa personne, intervenir dans certains films. Ainsi intègre-t-il certains de ses films à des spectacles qu'il met en scène, combinant décors, marionnettes géantes et acteurs/manipulateurs (*Faustus in Africa!*, *Ubu and the Truth Commission* et le tout récent opéra *il Ritorno d' Ulysse*). Ainsi le voit-on préférer au terme de "dessin animé", tellement connoté "entertainment", le terme de "dessins pour projection", lorsqu'il parle de son travail.

Intégrés à ces divers processus, les films de Kentridge n'atteignent vraiment leur plénitude que dans les spectacles, ou dans les installations comme celles présentées dans son exposition. Toute la vraie mesure de ses

grands formats y est perceptible, en compagnie des films et d'oeuvres spécialement créées pour la circonstance. Les originaux des "dessins pour projection", ces grands fusains, ultimes étapes d'un processus d'animation sous la caméra, dégagent une force différente, qui fait apprécier autrement les films dont ils constituent le matériau original.

Souvent en décalage par rapport à l'art contemporain, en marge des grands centres de création théâtrale, William Kentridge réussit ce paradoxe d'être invité la même année (97) à la Documenta de Kassel et au Festival d'Avignon.

Son utilisation du cinéma d'animation n'est pas pour rien dans cette belle consécration, qui tarde à venir du côté du cinéma d'animation lui-même.

Exposition William Kentridge
Allemagne, jusqu'au 11



Felix in Exile. © William Kentridge.

octobre 98, Kunstverein München, Munich

Autriche, du 15 novembre 98 au 15 janvier 99, Neue Galerie Graz am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz

¹ Goldby, Michael, "William Kentridge peintre" in *Revue Noire*, n°11, décembre 93, janvier février 94, pp.20 à 23

² Christov - Bakargiev, Carolyn, *William Kentridge*, catalogue d'exposition, Société des Expositions du Palais des Beaux Arts de Bruxelles, Bruxelles 1998

Texte original anglais de la citation (1): "I have been unable to escape Johannesburg. The four houses I have lived in, my school, studio, have all been within three kilometers of each other. And in the end all my work is rooted in this rather desperate provincial city. I have never tried to make illustrations of apartheid, but the drawings and films are certainly spawned by and feed off the brutalised society left in its

wake. I am interested in a political art, that is to say an art of ambiguity, contradiction, uncompleted gestures and uncertain endings. An art (and a politics) in which optimism is kept in check and nihilism at bay."

On-line Quicktime: 6 Soho Eckstein par William Kentridge.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7moinskentridge-frch.html>

Philippe Moins est c-o directeur du Festival du dessin animé et du film d'animation de Bruxelles, il a organisé à ce titre une des premières rétrospectives William Kentridge dans un festival d'animation. Il tient une rubrique cinéma d'animation pour le quotidien belge le Matin.

Note: Les lecteurs peuvent contacter les collaborateurs d'*Animation World Magazine* en envoyant un e-mail à editor@awn.com.



Faustus in Africa! © William Kentridge.

Italian Independent Animators

by Andrea Martignoni

As in other countries, Italy has an environment where creating animated movies is difficult and filled with obstacles, especially for independent animators trying to produce short films. It is the same old problem of a lack of visibility for the works that these artists have done. As a result, it is very difficult to know exactly who and how many Italian independent animators are out there.

In the past, and continuing today, many efforts have been made to solve, or at least alleviate, a situation that we could easily define as sad. The creation of an aid-agency like ASIFA-Italia in Turin, for instance, works as a means of distributing information to its members, most of whom are filmmakers. In addition, ASIFA-Italia is both a reference point and tangible asset for finding materials, screenings and consultants. Such an organization, however, has to face all kinds of difficulties, the least of which is financial.

There are no other structures working on a national level. However on a more local level it is possible to encounter organizations which can be helpful in the creation and wider distribution of works. Specialized festivals, or even short film festivals, often host a special section dedicated to animated movies. Plus, there are associations of artists attempting,

through a collective production process, to be more visible while not becoming a form of sterile self-representation. It is interesting to note the activities of a group of filmmakers from Bologna, who, not bound to animation,



are working inside the Link Project, and establishing video-cinematographic programming and production, which also attracts the active animators in town.

However, the artistic life for most independents is a solitary one, except for a few cases in which production activity is divided between personal projects and collaborations on television series, music videos, and television and cinema advertisements and commercials. In the last few years, with the incorporation of new digital technologies, we are witnessing a massive return of animation in advertising and television jingles,

similarly to what occurred during the '50s and '60s. Among young Italian animators, we can profile three directors as testaments to the above-mentioned state of affairs.

On a more local level it is possible to encounter organizations which can be helpful in the creation and wider distribution of works...

Ursula Ferrara

Ursula Ferrara, born in Pisa in 1961, has completed, from 1984 until now, five short films of a total length of no more than fifteen minutes. Still, the path she has taken is a very original one, gleaming very interesting results.

Some of her films have been successfully submitted for selection in many international cinema festivals: *Congiuntivo Futuro* (*Future Subjunctive*) won the New York Silver Award of the Art Director's Club in 1990; *Amore Asimmetrico* (*Asymmetrical Love*) won the Silver Ribbon in 1991; and the recent *Quasi Niente* (*Almost Nothing*) earned a prize for being the best Italian quality short film at the most recent Cartoombria in Perugia.

Ursula Ferrara's career began almost by chance, thanks to the Paris exhibition "Portrait d'un studio d'animation" which presented the works of the French

animation studio of the National Film Board of Canada in 1984.

Impressed by the pre-production done by Viviane Elnécavé while involved in the making of her film *Luna, Luna, Luna* (Moon, Moon, Moon), Ursula Ferrara began working on *Lucidi Folli* (Lucid Insanity, 1986), a film that is peculiar due to its strong black lines and the continuous metamorphosis of drawings. Unconsciously, she repeats the techniques used by the first animation filmmakers in history, such as Emile Cohl, who created his *Fantasmagorie* with almost the same method in 1908.

In the following *Congiuntivo Futuro* (1988) and *Amore Asimmetrico* (1990), the author still seems to be searching for her own personal style. According to Ferrara, this was what the films were about—real exercises. Especially in *Amore Asimmetrico*, the influences of contemporary visual art strongly appear, with references ranging from Picasso to Cubism.

Still drawn in pencil, these films are the prelude to the following *Come Persone* (Like People, 1995), her last black & white film which is a real little masterpiece in the Italian scene of animated drawings. A frantic sequence of images relates many micro-situations of a moving humanity (46!), all in a time length of roughly 90 seconds. Realized as the mad dolly shot of an insane cameraman, we can especially appreciate the film for its rhythmic quality, the accomplished stylistic unity of the drawings, which show great originality and refinement even without having precise references, and the inspired choice of music, which is a very lively transcription for violin of "Recuerdo de

Alhambra" by F. Tarrega, played by Vincenzo Bolognese.

Color has been her next step. In *Quasi Niente* (Almost Nothing, 1997), Ursula Ferrara makes use of oil paint, not on paper anymore, but cel. This represents a true example of moving paintings. Moreover, for the first time, our author seems to follow a sketched script. The film simply shows a young family having a Sunday breakfast, with interesting flashes, portrayed by brilliant passages of animated movement, in which we visit every character's memory.

The original soundtrack, with its intelligent use of surrounding noises, and the Tuscan author's great ability in realizing changes in perspective, display her continuous and increasing artistic growth. Ursula Ferrara is already involved in the production of her next color film.

Alberto D'Amico

The case of Alberto D'Amico, born in Rome in 1962, is a very different one. As a matter of fact, unlike Ursula Ferrara, D'Amico studied animation at the Experimental Centre of Cinematography

of Rome, where he is currently teaching. He has earned the reputation of being a very prolific artist with a very fast production time, and makes skillful use of most animation techniques as a result of years of research and experimentation.

The artistic life for most independents is a solitary one.

Alberto D'Amico's filmography, from 1987 to present, includes about 20 short films, often created in co-operation with other visual artists, painters, poets or musicians. In addition to his works of great formal interest, three shorts in his repertoire are particularly remarkable, even if they are very different from one another.

Le statue si amano (Statues Love Each Other, 1988), D'Amico's second film following his final student work *Tre Scherzi per Viola* (Three Scherzos for Viola, 1987), was realized on Video 8, using stop-motion applied to the heads of two statues (sculptured by the author's father, Stefano D'Amico) and different kinds of fruit. The interesting aspect of this film does not mainly lie in the technical accuracy (the film shows few noticeable mistakes), but in the perfect union between text, written by Roberto Gigliucci, and images. The two single elements would have been less interesting than the result obtained through the synergy of text/ word and text/ image. The impossibility of physical touch between the two statues becomes the cue for an extremely poetic discourse on love. This metaphor for the human condition, through the



Amore Asimmetrico (Asymmetrical Love, 1990) by Ursula Ferrara. © Ursula Ferrara.

mythology and formal classicism of plastic art and the naturalism of fruit, portrays a representation of fertility and infertility.

Pettini o Forchette? (Combs or Forks?, 1994) is developed from the contemporary artist G. Capogrossi's work to create a series of innumerable variations on a theme, using a number of different techniques ranging from drawing on paper or cels to painting on film. The original soundtrack composed by Fabrizio de Rossi and Lucio Gregoretti is extremely interesting. Based on the movie's storyboard, the music lends a rhythmical cadenza to the final editing of images. Alberto D'Amico has frequently collaborated with musicians from the Rome area. In fact, a recent short film of his, completely realized on film, was projected accompanied by an improvisationally based soundtrack performed live.

In the last few years, with the incorporation of new digital technologies, we are witnessing a massive return of animation in advertising and television jingles...

Tenga duro Signorina (Don't Give in Miss, 1998) was produced as the opening sequence for the full-length movie *Femminile Singolare* (Feminine Singular) directed by Claudio Del Punta, and is inspired by the beginning of Raymond Queneau's well-known work *Les Oeuvres complètes de Sally Mara*. Mixed media has been employed, which includes the animation of photographs, in addition to animation



Come Persone (Like People, 1995) by Ursula Ferrara. © Ursula Ferrara.

of Leonora Del Punta's original drawings.

Alberto D'Amico's technical expertise, accurate cultural references to literature, visual arts and music, in addition to the quality of his collaborations with other artists active in many different fields make him a special, multi-faceted artist of animated cinema. Well-known in the cultural circuit of Rome, his films have been submitted to many cinema festivals including the Mostra Internazionale del Cinema di Venezia (International Cinema Festival of Venice), and have also been presented on RAI Italian Broadcasting Television during a special program dedicated entirely to his work.

Saul Saguatti

Another example is Saul Saguatti, born in the Bologna area in 1966. He has been involved in the field of animation and video, since a very young age, accomplishing his first work of graphic animation for television in 1985 when he was just 19. In the last few years, besides his personal works, he has been and still is busy promoting a collective pro-

duction studio that is working mainly on commission, primarily in music videos.

Of his various productions a series of six shorts all gathered under the title of *Short Splatter Collection* (1995) is particularly interesting. The series' first three short films, *The Giant Communist Ant*, *Robo-Pope* and *The Atomik Maguma*, have been created by drawing directly on transparent film, a technique that is very similar to the one Vincenzo Gioanola employed and is a perfect vehicle for

the ingenious and desecrating ideas of the author. The remaining films, also conceived on film, exploit short visual and sound fragments taken from the movies of the Italian comedy pair, Ciccio and Franco. Popular comic actors in Italy during the '60s and '70s, Franco Franchi and Ciccio Ingrassia did countless B-movies, which were usually very funny, surreal remakes of world-wide, successful movies created of the same period. The film has been worked by Saul Saguatti not only employing colors but also transforming, etching and reassembling strips of the original films, in a frantic parody of a parody.

It would be nice if this art form could break away from this sort of ghetto...

The director is currently involved in the production of an experimental, abstract short film which will be created manually by reprocessing a sampling of a few film fragments on the computer; in a sort of etching on film made digitally on the computer.



From the Short Splatter Collection (1995) by Saul Saguatti. © Saul Saguatti.

Others...

Besides the above-mentioned film makers, who demonstrate how possible it is, in three completely different ways, to follow a path of animated experimentation, other young artists have already approached or are drawing near this sphere of cinema. We should mention: Flavia

fo, a young painter who has been recently engaged in two movies entirely realized on 35mm film.

Our highest hope is for all of these artists to continue to create their films successfully and for quality animation films to find more and more places for exhibition, besides just a few specialized festivals. It would be nice if this art

Ruotolo, who displayed a passion for abstract cinema and Norman McLaren in her first work *Chemical Marriage*, and is currently involved in her second short film; Sara Fabbri, who directed two remarkable little films all drawn in pencil on paper entitled *Vetri* (Glasses) and *Chiodi* (Nails); and last but not least, Sandra Siso-

form could break away from this sort of ghetto, outside of which only major television series productions and full-length Christmas films seem to exist, with a few rare exceptions. Too many years have passed where all animation looks the same.

Translated from Italian by Linda Massignan.

Andrea Martignoni is an Italian musician and researcher. He is currently involved in studying the various aspects of the relationship between music, sound, and image in animation films.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

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Animatori Indipendenti Italiani

di Andrea Martignoni

La situazione in cui si trova il cinema di animazione in Italia, come forse anche in altri paesi, è difficile e complicata per gli autori indipendenti che relizzano cortometraggi. E' sempre il vecchio problema della scarsa visibilità che le opere di questi artisti hanno. Da questo ne consegue la difficoltà di poter sapere chi e quanti siano con precisione gli animatori indipendenti italiani.

In passato, come attualmente, sono stati fatti sforzi non indifferenti per risolvere o alleviare questa situazione, che si può quantomeno definire dolorosa. La creazione di una struttura di aiuto come ASIFA Italia a Torino, con tutte le difficoltà in cui si dibatte, non ultime quelle economiche, funziona come strumento di informazione per gli associati (la più parte dei quali sono gli stessi autori), nonché come punto di riferimento, anche fisico, per il reperimento di materiali da visionare o da consultare.

Non esistono altre strutture funzionanti a livello nazionale, anche se spesso si incontrano ambiti organizzati a livello locale che possono essere utili per la creazione e per una maggiore circuitazione delle opere stesse: le rassegne specializzate o anche i festival di cortometraggi che ospitano spesso al loro interno film di animazione, oppure associazioni di artisti che tentano, attraverso la autoproduzione collettiva, di rendersi visibili senza ridursi ad una

forma di sterile autorappresentazione.¹

Ma la vita artistica della maggior parte degli indipendenti è solitaria, a parte pochi casi in cui l'attività produttiva si divide fra progetti personali e collaborazioni a serie televisive, a videoclip musicali o pubblicità e sigle televisive e cinematografiche.²

Fra i giovani autori



dell'animazione italiana possiamo citare tre esempi che ben testimoniano questo stato di cose.

Ursula Ferrara

Ursula Ferrara, nata a Pisa nel 1961, ha realizzato, dal 1984 ad oggi, cinque cortometraggi la cui durata totale non supera i quindici minuti. Ma il suo è un percorso originale e dai risultati di grande interesse.

Alcuni dei suoi film sono stati presentati con successo in concorso

in molti festival internazionali di cinema: *Congiuntivo Futuro* ha vinto il *Silver Award of the Art Director's Club* di New York nel 1990, *Amore Asimmetrico* il *Silver Ribbon* nel 1991, e il recente *Quasi Niente* si è guadagnato il premio come miglior cortometraggio d'autore italiano alla recente edizione di Cartoombria a Perugia.

La carriera di Ursula Ferrara inizia quasi per caso, complice l'incontro a Parigi con la mostra *Portrait d'un studio d'animation* che presentava il lavoro dello Studio Francese di animazione del National Film Board of Canada nel 1984.

Impressionata dal lavoro preparatorio di Viviane Elné-cavé alle prese con il suo film *Luna, Luna, Luna*, l'autrice inizia a lavorare a *Lucidi Folli* (1986), film che si caratterizza per il forte tratto nero e per le continue metamorfosi dei disegni. Inconsciamente Ursula Ferrara si trova a ripercorrere le tecniche utilizzate dai primi realizzatori della storia del cinema d'animazione, come Emile Cohl, che nel 1908 realizzava, quasi con lo stesso metodo, il suo *Fantasmagorie*.

Nei successivi *Congiuntivo Futuro* (1988) e *Amore Asimmetrico* (1990), l'autrice sembra essere ancora alla ricerca di uno stile personale. Come da lei stesso dichiarato, si tratta di veri e propri esercizi. Soprattutto in *Amore Asimmetrico* risultano evidenti le influenze dell'arte visiva contemporanea, da Picasso al Cubismo.



Amore Asimmetrico (1990) di Ursula Ferrara. © Ursula Ferrara.

Ancora realizzati a matita, questi film sono il preludio al successivo *Come Persone* (1995), ultima realizzazione in bianco e nero, vero e proprio piccolo capolavoro nel panorama italiano del disegno animato. Una successione frenetica di immagini che narrano tante microsituazioni di umanità in movimento (quarantasei!) in circa novanta secondi di durata. Realizzato come una folle carrellata di un cameraman impazzito, il film si fa apprezzare per la qualità del ritmo, la raggiunta unità stilistica del tratto, che senza più riferimenti precisi si dimostra di grande originalità e raffinatezza, ed anche per la indovinata scelta della musica, una indiolata trascrizione per violino del *Recuerdo de Alhambra* di F. Tarrega, eseguita da Vincenzo Bolognese.

Il passo successivo è il colore. Per *Quasi Niente* (1997) Ursula Ferrara utilizza il colore a olio, non più su carta ma su acetato. Si tratta di un vero e proprio esempio di pittura in movimento. Per la prima volta, inoltre, l'autrice sembra avere seguito una idea di sceneggiatura ed il film narra semplicemente una prima colazione domenicale di una giovane famiglia, con interessanti momenti in cui, attraverso passaggi virtuosistici nel movimento animato, si

entra nei ricordi di ciascuno dei personaggi.

Colonna sonora originale, con utilizzo intelligente dei suoni d'ambiente, e grande capacità di realizzare cambiamenti di prospettiva testimoniano della continua crescita dell'autrice toscana, già alle prese con il suo successivo film, sempre a colori.

Alberto D'Amico

L'esempio di Alberto D'Amico, nato a Roma nel 1962, è di fatto molto differente. Al contrario di Ursula Ferrara, D'Amico ha studiato animazione, al Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia di Roma, dove attualmente insegna, ed il suo lavoro si caratterizza per una maggiore prolificità, con tempi di realizzazione molto rapidi, e l'utilizzo di quasi tutte le tecniche d'animazione, frutto di anni di studio e sperimentazione.

La filmografia di Alberto D'Amico, dal 1987 ad oggi, comprende già una ventina di cortometraggi, spesso realizzati in collaborazione con altri artisti visivi, pittori, poeti o musicisti. Oltre a lavori di grande interesse formale, tre cortometraggi, molto diversi tra loro, sono particolarmente degni di nota.



Come Persone (1995) di Ursula Ferrara. © Ursula Ferrara.

Le statue si amano (1988), secondo film di D'Amico, dopo il saggio di fine studi *Tre Scherzi per Viola* (1987), è realizzato in Video 8 con animazione di oggetti (Stop-Motion), qui applicata a due teste di statue (realizzazione dello scultore Stefano D'Amico, padre dell'autore) e a diversi tipi di frutta. L'aspetto interessante non è legato principalmente alla tecnica (il film presenta anche alcuni evidenti difetti), ma al perfetto connubio fra il testo di Roberto Gigliucci e le immagini. Le due componenti prese singolarmente sarebbero, sommate, meno interessanti del risultato che si attua attraverso la sinergia fra testo/parola e testo/immagine. L'impossibilità di contatto fisico fra le due statue è spunto per una trattazione altamente poetica, sull'amore. Una metafora della condizione umana attraverso la mitologia e il classicismo formale dell'arte plastica e il naturalismo della frutta: rappresentazione della infertilità e della fecondità.

Pettini o Forchette? (1994) parte dal modulo dell'artista contemporaneo G. Capogrossi, per una serie di innumerevoli variazioni su tema, applicandosi in varie tecniche, dal disegno su carta o su acetato, alla pittura su pellicola. Di estremo interesse la colonna sonora originale di Fabrizio de Rossi e Lucio Gregoretti. Composta a partire dallo storyboard del film, la musica è servita come cadenza ritmica per il montaggio definitivo delle immagini.³

Tenga duro Signorina (1998) è stato realizzato come sequenza di apertura per il lungometraggio *Femminile Singolare* di Claudio del Punta, ed è ispirato alla parte iniziale del famoso testo di Raymond Queneau *Les Oeuvres complètes de Sally Mara*. Lavorato

con una tecnica mista che comprende l'animazione di fotografie oltre all'animazione di disegni originali di Leonora del Punta.

La valenza tecnica, i precisi riferimenti culturali alla letteratura, alle arti visive e alla musica, la qualità delle collaborazioni con altri artisti attivi in diversi campi, fanno di Alberto D'Amico un artista polivalente nel cinema d'animazione. Ben inserito nell'ambiente culturale di Roma, i suoi film hanno partecipato a molteplici festival di cinema fra cui *La Mostra Internazionale del Cinema di Venezia*, sono inoltre stati presentati, con uno speciale interamente a lui dedicato, alla RAI radio-televisione italiana.

Saul Saguatti

Un altro caso è quello di Saul Saguatti, nato vicino a Bologna nel 1966. Inizia a occuparsi di animazione e video fin da giovanissimo, realizzando un primo lavoro di animazioni grafiche per la televisione a diciannove anni, nel 1985.

Da qualche anno, oltre a lavori personali, è promotore di una struttura collettiva che produce principalmente su commissione, in particolare per videoclips musicali.

Nella sua svariata produzione, particolarmente interessante è una serie di sei corti raccolti sotto l'unico titolo di *Short Splatter Collection* (1995). I primi tre frammenti (*The Giant Communist Ant*; *Robo-Pope*; *The Atomik Maguma*) sono realizzati disegnando direttamente sulla pellicola trasparente con una tecnica simile a quella utilizzata da Vincenzo Gioanola e sono carichi di una geniale vena ironica e dissacrante; gli altri, sempre realizzati su pellicola, utilizzano brevi frammenti sia

sonori che visivi, tratti da film interpretati dalla coppia di comici italiani Ciccio e Franco. Attori famosi in Italia a cavallo fra gli anni sessanta e settanta, Franco Franchi e Ciccio Ingrassia interpretarono una innumerevole serie di *B-movies*, rifacimenti in chiave comico-surreale di altrettanti film di successo mondiale realizzati nel medesimo periodo. In questi casi la pellicola viene trattata da Saul Saguatti, oltre che coi colori, anche trasformando, graffiando e rimontando spezzoni delle pellicole originali, in una frenetica parodia della parodia.

Attualmente l'autore sta lavorando alla produzione di un cortometraggio sperimentale, astratto, realizzato rielaborando manualmente al computer il campionamento di alcuni frammenti di pellicola, una sorta di incisione su pellicola digitalizzata al computer.

Altri...

Oltre a questi autori, che dimostrano come sia possibile, in modi del tutto differenti, seguire la strada della sperimentazione animata, altri giovani artisti si sono avvicinati o si stanno avvicinando a questa forma di cinema. Da citare Flavia Ruotolo, attualmente alle prese con il suo secondo cortometraggio, che con l'opera prima *Chemical Marriage* dimostra la sua passione per Norman McLaren e il cinema astratto; Sara Fabbri, che con *Vetri* e *Chiodi* ha realizzato due pregevoli piccoli film disegnati a matita su carta, e Sandra Sisofo, giovane pittrice, recentemente impegnata su due film interamente realizzati lavorando su pellicola di 35 mm.

Ci si augura che questi artisti possano continuare a realizzare con successo i loro film e che il cinema



Short Splatter Collection (1995) di Saul Saguatti. © Saul Saguatti.

d'animazione d'autore riesca ancora di più a trovare spazi differenti, che non siano soltanto i pochi festival specializzati, in modo che l'animazione esca da una forma di ghetto al di fuori della quale sembrano esistere solo le grandi produzioni di serie televisive e di lungometraggi natalizi, da troppi decenni, con rare eccezioni, sempre uguali a se stesse.

Notes

¹ Interessante a questo proposito è il tentativo di un gruppo di filmmakers di Bologna, non solo legati all'animazione, che, all'interno del Link Project, stanno creando una struttura di produzione e di programmazione video-cinematografica che raccoglie anche alcuni animatori che operano in città.

² Negli ultimi anni, complici le nuove tecnologie digitali, ci si trova di fronte ad un ritorno massiccio dell'animazione nelle pubblicità e nelle sigle in televisione, un po' come avvenne negli anni '50 e '60.

³ Alberto D'Amico collabora frequentemente con musicisti dell'area romana. Un suo recente cortometraggio, completamente realizzato su pellicola, è stato musicato attraverso una improvvisazione dal vivo durante la proiezione.

Andrea Martignoni, musicista e studioso italiano, si occupa dei molteplici aspetti del rapporto suono-musica-immagine nel cinema d'animazione.

Eating and Animating: Balancing the Basics for U.K. Independents

by Marie Beardmore

How do they eat? We all know that animation festivals are full of talent scouts from major studios looking for the latest crop of graduates to work on their productions, but what if independence is your thing? What if you want to make your own personal films? In this scenario, put simply, how do you eat? How do you sustain yourself job to job?

To the independent filmmaker, the outside world can be a hostile place.

To the independent film maker, the outside world can be a hostile place. A side-effect of the current boom in the genre is that more animators are being churned out, which means that filmmakers aren't just competing against their peers but against other animators, a sort of stockpile of talent competing for the same jobs, and increasingly doing it at an international level. The competition is rife and not only for work. Schemes such as MOMI and Animate offer animators an opportunity to make personal films and get paid for doing so. The MOMI scheme, an initiative between Channel 4 and the Museum of the Moving Image (MOMI) which is now in its eighth year, is in particular a lifeline to new graduates as it offers enough money to live on.

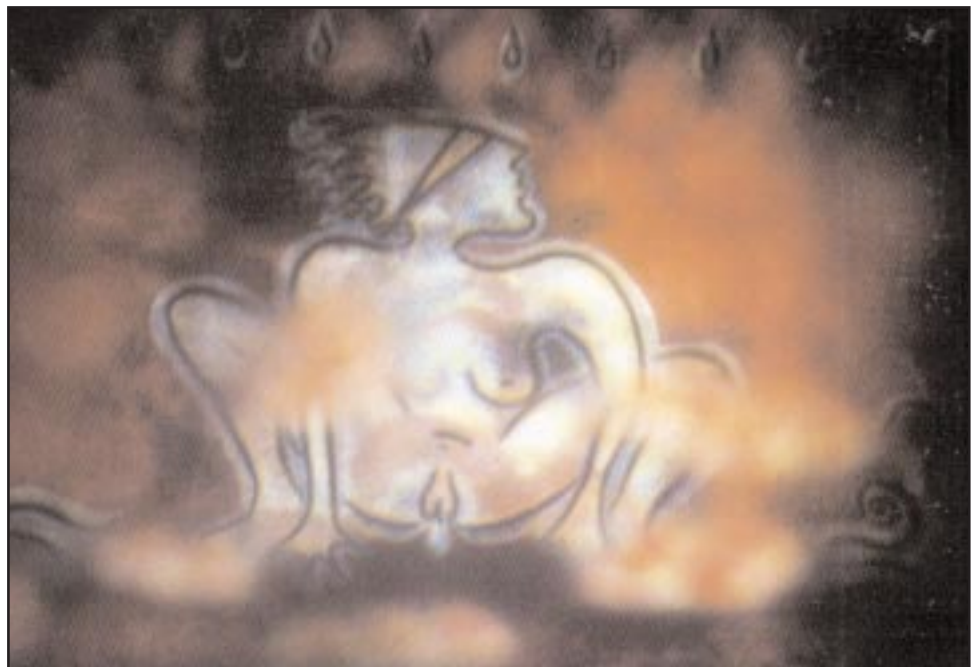
The Animate award only offers commissions to a maximum of U.K. £25,000, which isn't a lot to make a film and keep body and soul together.

MOMI's Lucky Few

There's another difficulty with MOMI which has nothing to do with the selection procedure. Animators selected have to work on display in a glass booth measuring just 3m x 3m and colloquially known as the 'fish tank.' If such conditions have adversely affected the work of candidates, it hasn't affected the number of entrants. This year there were 80 applicants, and with only four awards a year that means a lot of

disappointed people. As you'd expect, most of the MOMI people are apprehensive of being on display, even if only at the start. However once acclimatized, they soon settle down, or so I'm told, and even start to have some fun with the audience. For instance Sam Fell, a model animator, sat stock still until he'd garnered quite a crowd and only then would start to become animated himself.

The latest inmate is Lizzie Oxby, who's currently working on her film *Villa 21*, a model animation about a man that's been pushed into a madness which centers around his growing paranoia of the telephone. Previous to MOMI, which graduates have up



Kyla Parker's *Cage of Flame*. © Kyla Parker

to five years to take up, Oxby has found a living through a variety of means, including producing and directing an MTV Europe station ident called *Flick Flack* and as a model maker for another MTV logo for Star TV called *Star*. Oxby is also a keen proponent of new media and has provided the animation for various CD-ROMs including animating and designing a skeleton puppet for Real World's CD Rom *Griffin and Sabine* and creating a photomontage for

experience in the glass booth, she says, has so far been "not as bad as I imagined it to be," although size wise, the room is known to be tough on model animators. Despite the drawbacks - the security camera and the vague impression that you're an exhibit in a zoo—MOMI retains its popularity and is seen as more than a first foot on the ladder. Previous MOMI participants have included Ruth Lingford with *Death of the Maiden* and Ian Clarke with *Deviant*, both of whom have captured international attention.

But you can only do MOMI once and even though so far Clare Kitson, commissioning editor for Channel 4, has commissioned all the films, she's not obliged to do so. Moreover, you can't live forever on one film so where do you turn next? Kyla Parker has been an independent filmmaker on and off for ten years, having started off on an enter-

only champions regional animators as well those based in London, but also manages to encourage diversity as well.

There's another difficulty with MOMI which has nothing to do with the selection procedure.

Animate Via Commission

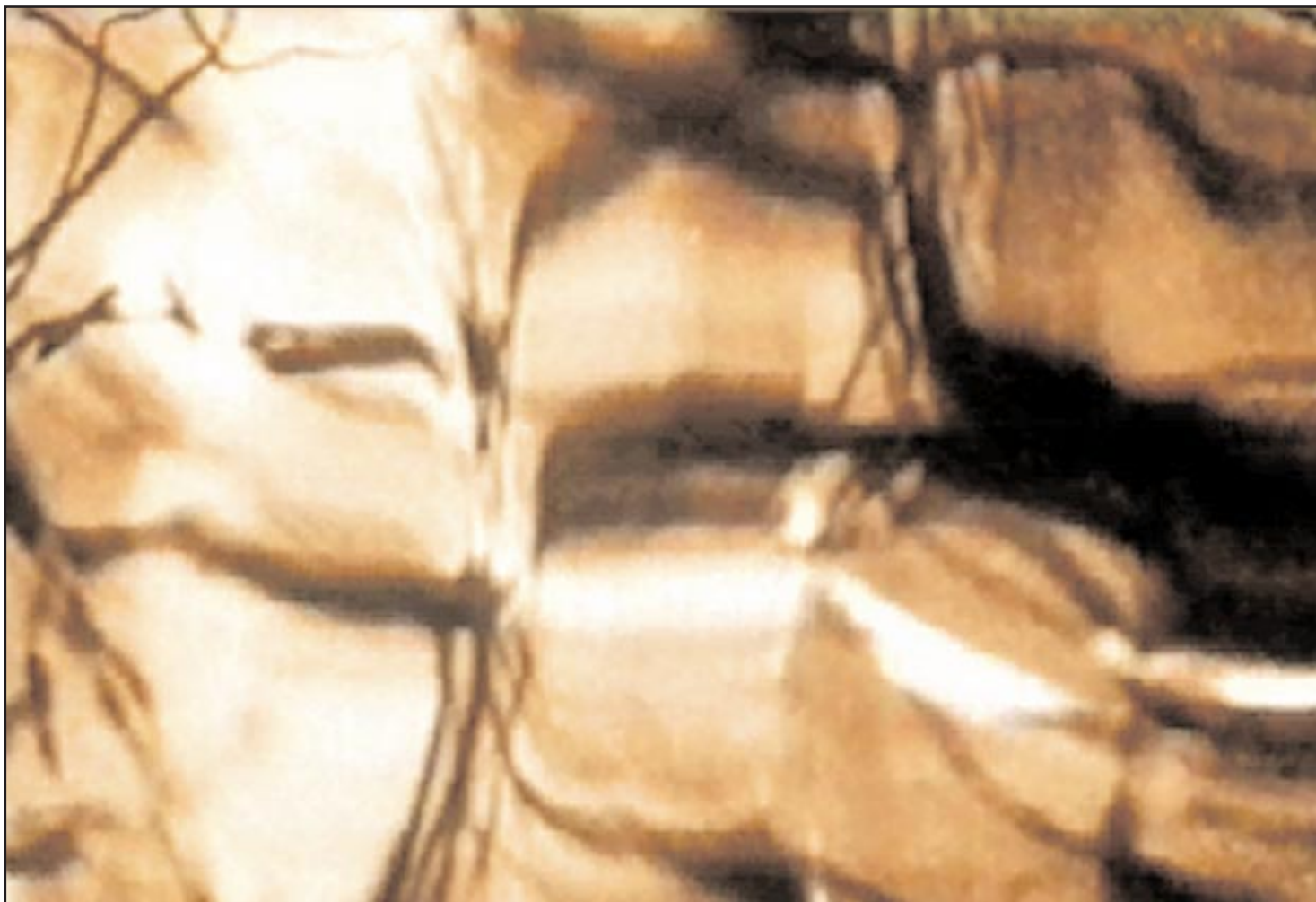
The Animate scheme, a collaboration between the Arts Council's Visual Arts Department and Channel 4, offers commissions up to £25,000 for innovative animation. It's been a godsend to the independent sector and has funded 41 projects, including Sarah Cox's *3 Ways to Go*, which won "Best Film Under Ten Minutes" at this year's British Animation Awards, and *Feeling My Way*, by Jonathan Hodgson, which won "Most Creative Use of New Technologies." Parker's own Animate film is *Cage of Flame*, a film produced on a shoestring budget which used pixillation and stop motion and is based upon dreams during menstruation. She has also made another film called *Sunset Strip*. Despite her success and somewhat fame, Parker admits that it is "economically difficult to survive," and is becoming more so because there are less initiatives to help animators and, as aforementioned, an ever-growing supply of talent. You'd think the animation boom would in itself offer some checks and balances but as Parker explains, that's not entirely the case. "It's harder to earn a living now than ten years ago, as 1988 was the end of the public access workshops. They've virtually all gone now." Parker also finds it tougher being in the regions but says there are compensations,



Image from a film by Hotessa Lawrence. © Hotessa Lawrence.

a CD Cover called *Schitzoid* for Readymade Media. Her particular style of animation has also attracted the attention of the music industry: EMI commissioned her to make a promo for an artist called Adam F after seeing her degree show, a stop frame and mixed media work which won rave reviews. Oxby has also been a regular on the festival circuit with her short film *The Lacemaker*, which was sponsored by BBC Bristol and won a gold medal at the Bilbao Short Film Festival. Her

prise allowance scheme in 1988. It was, she says, one of "the odd good things that the Tory government bought in." Parker is one of the few filmmakers based outside London and tends to jump from commission to commission juxtaposing her commercial work with her own films. She's just completed the titles for a quirky history series from Channel 4, which she'll follow with another personal film. A film maker who lives outside of the M25, Parker is a fan of the Animate scheme which she says not



Reece Millidge's *Chemical Reaction*. © Reece Millidge.

namely "being by the sea." She'd like to see the current system diversified to give more sources of funding. For now until the millennium however, Parker doesn't have to worry about the next commission. She's taking a breather from animation for her next project which is to create a living community archive for the people of Plymouth. Funded by the Single Regeneration Budget, in partnership with South West Arts and Plymouth Council, "It's a nice project," says Parker, which will be adopted by locals in two years time.

Building Your Own Way

An independent filmmaker who now has a full-length animated feature to his name is Tony Johnson, a Cardiff based animator

whose film *Fallen Angels*, an animated road movie, has received critical acclaim. Unlike many, Johnson has never made a film on either the Animate or the MOMI scheme but has funded himself through a variety of media jobs, including graphics and directing a number of documentaries. In making *Fallen Angels* Johnson showed amazing resourcefulness and tenacity. He set up his own studio and trained his own animators. He's currently working on his next film, entitled *Island of the Dead* which already has most of its funding in place. Hopefully this will ensure that Johnson is able to focus on making a spellbinding animated film.

The MOMI scheme is for new graduates but many find

applying the same year they've graduated too intense. The recent crop of RCA graduates are finding various ways to earn a crust.

The Animate scheme...offers commissions up to U.K. £25,000 for innovative animation.

Hotessa Lawrence has just completed her two year post-grad in animation and is currently living at home so she "doesn't have to worry about the rent." She has also been fortunate in finding commercial work as a hand artist on live-action ads for Two Rivers, a production company, but has also "done some really horrible jobs" to make ends meet. At the moment she's one of many pitching for the

title sequence of the Channel 4 show *Dope Sheet* but is optimistic about the future. "I've only been out of college a few months and I haven't even taken my show reel around. Although I have an agent I still need to get my reel to them." Her film, *At the Drop of a Hat*, got a fair bit of feedback, she says. "Hibbert Ralph got in touch - they're just waiting for work to come in that they think I'm suitable for." She isn't applying for MOMI yet though, as she thinks it is too soon.

Another of this year's RCA graduates is Reece Millidge and like many of his peers, he's set on making it as an independent. A graduate of Bournemouth where he did a degree, he's found an excellent support network among his MA colleagues at the Royal College. He's another filmmaker who's drawn to mixed media and has found expression in his film *Chemical Reaction*. However, in the day to day business of surviving, he's made ends meet by working as an assistant animator for several com-

panies, including Bermuda Shorts and Susan Young in London. Next year, though, MOMI or Animate beckon.

The MOMI scheme is for new graduates but many find applying the same year they've graduated too intense.

Cartoon's Draw

Finally, you can't talk about animation in this context without mentioning Cartoon, part of Media II, and the only dedicated body that survived the demise of Media I intact. Every year, Cartoon helps the animation industry tick over by giving development aid to projects that are pitched at its annual Cartoon Forum. This year's event, which is to be held on the Greek island of Syros, will include 441 hours of proposed programming, so there should be something for everyone. All of the main European countries will attend with proposals, however it's

France and the UK that will bring the most projects—France has 20 and the UK, 16. Germany is bringing seven projects, Belgium six and Greece and Spain five each. Although producers can get funding from Cartoon, there are caveats. For instance, any money loaned has to be paid back even if the project is never made, which keeps many hard-up producers from even applying for funding.

Marie Beardmore is a London-based freelance journalist who specializes in writing about the international animation industry. She is also developing her own animation projects which include a children's series for 4-9 year olds and an animated sitcom.

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Animation in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Start and an Abrupt Stop

by Rada Sestic

Before the war broke out in the former Yugoslavia, Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was a lively and important center of film production. Although directors from Sarajevo had always depended on technical equipment from studios in Belgrade and Zagreb, they had made their own distinctive contribution to the national—that was Yugoslavian—film production, especially in documentaries and fiction filmmaking. Animation was never a strong point of the Bosnian cinema. One of the reasons was that the production was already established in studios in other Republics of Yugoslavia: first in Zagreb (Croatia) and, later on, in Belgrade (Serbia), then Skopje (Macedonia) and Ljubljana (Slovenia).

Most of these films were made in improvised studios in the kitchens of animators' homes.

A Limited History

Still, in 1956, Zlatko Seselj, for the purposes of an advertising agency, made his first animated commercial. It was two minutes long, drawn on professional cels, shot on 35 mm negative and meant to be screened in a cinema.

In the early Sixties, the same artist, along with a few other enthusiasts, started an animation studio

in

Sarajevo. It was part of the production company "Bosna Film." Their debut cartoon *A House in the Flowers*, made in 1962, was again directed by Seselj. He became a very important figure at that time, but he would also play a significant role in the attempt to revive the animation studio in Sarajevo, 20 years later. He made his first films together with caricaturist Adi Mulabegovic. Mainly, their films were very inventive commercials.

Artistic animation began in the same year with *A Shop Window* by Vefik Hadzismajlovic. It was a puppet animation, which

was not a very popular technique at that time, or even in later years or in other Yugoslavian centers of animation. The same director

made a second animation two years later called *Nocturne*. However, after this work he completely abandoned animation and became known as a very sophisticated director of documentaries.

During the recent war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995), he made a few films about life during the war and one about Sarajevo's chamber orchestra, which is especially highly acclaimed.

Another director who made an attempt at animation in those days, but became famous by directing feature fiction films later on, was Hajrudin Siba Krvavac. Like Hadzismajlovic, he also made his debut in animation with puppets. The film was called *Miss of the Green City*. Today, this director is one of the most respected personalities in the history of Bosnian cinema, especially because of his fiction films about



the Second World War. During the war in Bosnia, he didn't want to leave Sarajevo. Being a heart patient, he couldn't get proper medical treatment and died.

Everything in socialist Yugoslavia was ruled by the communist party and was in the hands of the State, so no animator could do anything on his or her own.

The production of Bosnian animation lasted for only a few more years in Sarajevo. Most of these films were made in improvised studios in the kitchens of animators' homes. Bosnia and Herzegovina's cultural funds did not support animators at that time and did not provide working facilities or adequate equipment for shooting.

Everything in socialist Yugoslavia was ruled by the communist party and was in the hands of the State, so no animator could do anything on his or her own. First of all, filmmakers were not rich enough to buy things, like a camera, editing table, film stock, or even cels and paper for drawing, for themselves. Second, it was not allowed to produce privately any cultural and public product like a film. Everything had to be produced, controlled and owned by the State. Automatically that also included State censorship, although this did not cause the problems in the field of animation as much as it did in the fiction or documentary genres. Animators almost always succeeded in finding a way to be smarter than the state officials! Namely, political messages and criticisms of the system were said indirectly or between the lines and were not visible in the films on first sight. As

a result, State officials couldn't prove nor sue the animator over possible negative connotations as a comment on the society.

In the late Sixties, directors Slobodan Jovicic, Mehmed Fehimovic, Stanislav Busic and others, appeared and acted as animators for a very short time. Soon after that, most of them switched to documentaries and fiction films or went into production jobs. The studio "Bosna Film" economically crashed because of a very expensive feature film production about the Second World War. It forever closed its doors to any further film-

in nonprofessional cinema organizations. As a member of the Sarajevo city cinema club, "Rijeci mladih" (Words of Youngsters), Ivan Begic made a very distinctive cartoon. Sisters Sestic from the Academic cinema club made a puppet film *Timotije*, which became one of the most rewarded films in the history of Bosnian nonprofessional animation. Hasan Ibrahim-pasic from Sarajevo, Aco Dimitrieski from Zenica, Petar Magazin from Konjic and a few others, have also been making important steps in the development of animation in Bosnia. Since, they were not bur-



Goja, Munk, Lotrek. © Midhat Ajanovic.

making. The new studio "Sutjeska Film" then came to prominence. Unfortunately, the leading people there did not have any understanding for the enthusiasm of a young generation and their desperate endeavor to express their artistic needs in animation.

The Amateurs Keep Animating

In the two decades that followed, animation among professionals was absolutely neglected in Bosnia. Nevertheless, it remained very important and alive

dened by the expectations of other people regarding their works, these young people could afford complete freedom, both artistically and ideologically. The average cost of a film made in a nonprofessional cinema club was equivalent to about U.S. \$50, and money was supplied by the government organizations for the activities of youth. In the late Seventies one of the most persistent amateur animators of Bosnia made his presence known. As a member of the Academic cinema

club, Midhat Ajanovic has made six short cartoons. Nonprofessionals tried out a number of different techniques using various materials, all animated in, maybe not a proper, but surely an interesting, way.

Zagreb and Belgrade were cities where an animator from any part of the former Yugoslavia, if accepted, could go to work on animation.

Obviously, many young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina were interested in animation, but the production companies hesitated to give a chance to any of them. In their opinion, animation was too expensive, took too much time and required skilled people who were, at that time, not available in Bosnia. Besides, Yugoslavia was at that time an undivided country and ambitious artists already had a place to go for developing their skills and ideas.

The Impact of Zagreb and Belgrade

Zagreb and Belgrade were cities where an animator from any part of the former Yugoslavia, if accepted, could go to work on animation. "Zagreb Film" in Croatia was from the Fifties, a very important place for animators. No one could compete with them. Filmmakers such as Dovnikovic, Dragic, Stalter, Marks, Jutrisa, Grgic and many others, were regularly making their cartoons and representing Yugoslavia at the festivals abroad. They were especially known by their new, reduced style of animation and, in a time of Disney domination, that was accepted as a revolutionary step. In 1962, Dusan Vukotic from Zagreb

won an Oscar for his film *Surrogate*. This remains as the only Oscar in the history of Yugoslavian cinema. Since Yugoslavia was then one country, that was a success for all animators, no matter whether they lived in Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia or Macedonia. Actually, the Oscar winner, Mr. Vukotic is Montenegrin (Montenegro is a part of today's new Yugoslavia), but lived and worked in Zagreb. Indeed, he still lived there at the time of his recent death. Dovnikovic and Dragic are Serbians, but they too always lived in Croatia. Dovnikovic still lives in Zagreb, while Dragic currently lives in Munich, Germany.

In the following years, the success of "Zagreb Film" was joined by animators from Belgrade, Novi Sad and Skopje. In the capital of Macedonia, Skopje, a few artists started under the studio banner of "Vardar-film" animation. Darko Markovic, known as Dar-Mar, created numerous cartoons which were mainly commentary on political activity in Yugoslavia. His most ambitious work *Kasa*, won several prestigious awards. Another important director from Skopje was Boro Pjeginov who focused on object animation. Many others followed them. Films by Sarajevo directors were not contributing to Yugoslavian success at the festivals abroad. They were too insignificant in comparison to the works from other Yugoslavian studios. Plus, at that time, it was not even possible to send any work abroad. Every film was a sort of representation of the entire country and had to be chosen by State officials.

A New Start

As for the revival of professional film making in Bosnia, most

of the credit goes to Zlatko Seselj, who was then, in the early Eighties, a retired man with a lot of experience and energy to start something new. Of course, it was not easy, because private production companies still didn't exist. All cultural production was, as before, financed by the State. State producers in Bosnia considered animation a waste of money. With the help of film directors Bakir Tanovic and Milutin Kosovac, Seselj gathered young people, who were either caricaturists, painters, architects or students, and started an animation studio in 1984. It was simply called, as in the old days, "Bosna."

Seselj gathered young people, who were either caricaturists, painters, architects or students, and started an animation studio in 1984.

While this studio was busy with the administrative problems of starting a production, a journalist and already known caricaturist and cartoonist, Midhat Ajanovic, made at his kitchen table, his animation debut. The company Forum financed his two minute cartoon *A Hero*. The film was screened in cinemas before Emir Kusturica's feature film, *When the Father is Away?*, which was produced by the same company. Both films were Forum's debut in the field of production. This is one of the rare examples of animation films, especially from Bosnia, being screened in a cinema. One year later, in 1985, "Bosna" started its production. The beginning was extremely good. Nedžad Begovic, previously an amateur film maker, made his first professional animation called *EKG*. It was very simple but revealed a brilliant idea. All

phases of human life were suggested in the film by sound, while on the screen just one tiny line danced as a symbol of physical, as well as spiritual, life. This film has won three international and two national awards and announced the Bosnian studio as a very promising one. After this film, Begovic made several more

(*Two he-goats*, *Homo duplex*, *Insomnia*, *Amoeba*), and then gave up animation for fiction film production. Still, his importance in animation remains, especially because of his desire to experiment. He tried different styles of drawing and various ways of animating these drawings, in addition to testing ways of connecting sounds and images. During the war, he did not leave Sarajevo. He made a few documentaries, started a career as a visual artist and worked as an assistant director in feature fiction production.

In 1985, Midhat Ajanovic joined the production company "Bosna," and made *Post Scriptum*, his second professional film. In the next five years he made cartoons like: *Rain*, *The Message*, *Champion*, *Goja*, *Munk*, *Lotrek*, *Ikar* and *Voyeur*. The last film was made on the eve of the war and disintegration of Yugoslavia. At that time, private production companies made their appearance in Yugoslavia, and this film was financed by a new producer called, *Atalanta*. As a caricaturist for daily newspapers,



I Am Telling You The Story. © Darko Predanic.

Ajanovic was very politically involved and almost all of his films reflected current issues in Yugoslavian society. Using quite a minimalist graphic style when shaping his figures and simple animation movements, Ajanovic artistically emphasizes important questions of everyday life. After spending two years in Sarajevo during the war, he left his home city. Today he lives in Sweden where he continues creating comics, but has given up animation almost completely in order to create scripts and write novels about the war.

In the two decades that followed, animation among professionals was absolutely neglected in Bosnia.

The third person who has made a big impact on Bosnian animation is Darko Predanic (*Deus ex machina* and *Et cetera* in 1975, *Acerban* in 1982), an architect who started as a nonprofessional. Later, he continued at the "Bosna" studio as a full-time professional

animator and made some very impressive cartoons (*Graphite XXI*, *I Am Telling You The Story*, *Per Aspera Ad Astra*). The main characteristics of his style were: very rich, colorful designs, complex stories and a harmony between image, rhythm of editing, and sound. His stories would draw viewers into a surrealistic world of rather futuristic, cold, alienated, urban beings. Predanic won a major award

at the national festival of short films in Belgrade. Soon after that, as an employee at Television Sarajevo, he began experimenting with computer animation. Unfortunately, his work was also interrupted by the war in the former Yugoslavia. He fled from Sarajevo, and now lives in London trying to start computer animating again.

A famous painter from Sarajevo, Mersad Berber, tried with the help of a film director from "Zagreb Film," to animate his drawings. This was extremely complex in regards to technique because the animation was of oversized drawings. This expensive project named *Tempo Secondo*, was neither successfully done or delightfully received. However, it did open a new page in the style of Bosnian animation.

Another young person from Sarajevo who devoted himself to animation was Drasko Turciovic, an architect who worked on other animators' films beside his regular job. A few years before the war started he began his own project. It was a difficult one and

required a lot of time, knowledge and experience. After two years of permanent work, he managed to finish drawing. At that time, the war was already going on. Turcinovic spent more than three years in the besieged Sarajevo and finally fled to The Netherlands where he took refuge. There, he was able to finish his film. Under the title *The 8th Day*, this film was screened at the International Film Festival in Utrecht in 1996 and at some other international festivals as a Dutch representative.

Another film could be finished if the painter and animator Nevenka Sestic Fiser, having fled the city, could get her film's thousands of cels and drawings out of Sarajevo. She was one of the founders of the "Bosna" animation studio, and due to production difficulties her ambitious animation

film *Rhythm of Passing By* couldn't be finished. Executed in the paint on cel technique, this film, directed with her collaborator Nenad Fiser, related her views on the development of civilizations throughout history, applying characteristic artistic expressions and styles of different cultures and eras. Today, living in The Netherlands, she works with Amsterdam's renowned director Monique Renault.

After struggling to start animation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, young artists found their own ways to learn and practice this demanding craft. After having work selected for the festival in Annecy (*Goja*, *Munk*, *Lotrek* by Ajanovic), other festivals in the former Yugoslavia and being accepted as members of ASIFA, animators from Sarajevo were brutally

interrupted by the war. The animation studio is probably one of the last things to be rebuilt in Sarajevo, a city that was severely damaged.

Rada Sestic is a film critic and director, who lived in Sarajevo, former Yugoslavia. In the beginning of the war she fled to the Netherlands where she writes for film magazines. Recently she finished the short film, Room Without A View.

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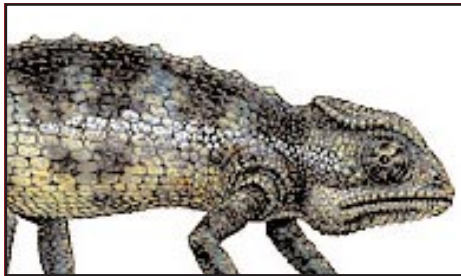
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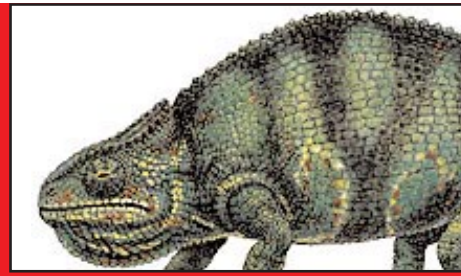
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Bud-Weis-Er:



Computer-Generated Frogs and Lizards Give Bud a Boost

by Karen Raugust

Anheuser-Busch introduced its computer-generated, brand-name-croaking Budweiser Frogs in a 1995 Super Bowl commercial. The characters struck an immediate chord with consumers, who began to demand merchandise featuring the Frogs. As a result, Anheuser-Busch authorized a range of products, marking the first time since Spuds McKenzie in the late 1980s, that the company—a significant corporate trademark licensor—initiated an ad-related merchandising effort. T-shirts have been the most successful items, but the program extended into accessories, novelties, glassware and sporting goods, among other items.

During the 1997 NBA playoffs, Anheuser-Busch premiered a series of spin-off ads, which still air, starring a pair of wise-cracking Lizards (along with cameos by the Frogs). This campaign inspired a similar range of merchandise. "The demand [for the Lizards] was not as dramatic as it was with the Frogs initially," says Cheryl Pfneisel, licensing manager at Anheuser-Busch. "You can't discount the fact that the Frogs were introduced during the

Super Bowl."

The Budweiser Frogs and Lizards represent just two of the many licensing efforts in the 1980s and 1990s that have focused on images and tag-lines from television commercials. (For a list of the most popular campaigns and detailed information on each, please see *Selected Licensing Programs Inspired by Advertising Campaigns*.) Several high-profile merchandising programs have been based on animated campaigns. In addition to the Frogs and Lizards, they include the California Raisins and Coca-Cola icons such as the computer-generated Polar Bears and Bud Ice Penguins.

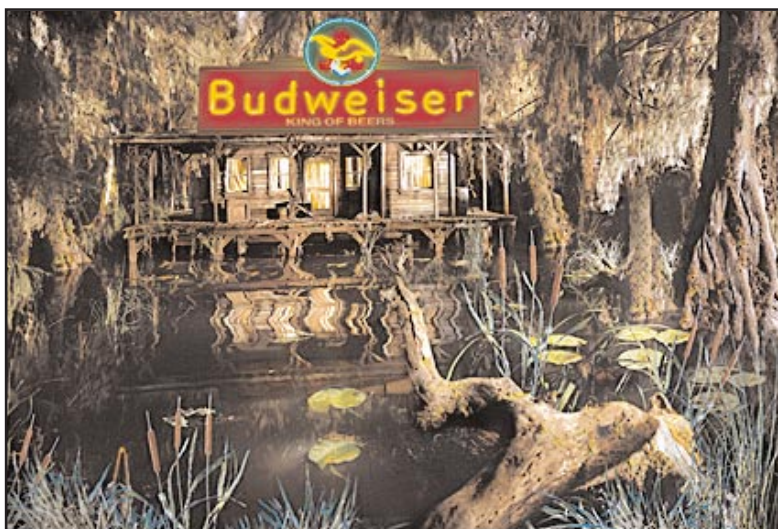
Live-action advertising, usually containing a memorable tag-line, have also been the basis for

licensing programs. Among the examples are the current Taco Bell Chihuahua and its catch phrase "Yo quiero Taco Bell"; Wendy's "Where's the Beef?" commercials; and several Anheuser-Busch campaigns ranging from Spuds McKenzie in the 1990s to Bud Light's "I Love You, Man" and "Yes, I Am" in the 1990s. Still other merchandised commercials feature puppets or costumed characters, such as Nike's Lil Penny and Duracell's Putterman family.

Timing is Key

TV ad campaigns tend to become popular quickly, meaning that merchandise must appear right away to capitalize on demand when it exists. On the other hand, demand can end as soon as the commercials go off the air, which often occurs without warning to licensees, licensing agents and retailers.

In the case of the Budweiser Frogs, t-shirts were the first products available, launching three to four months after the Frogs' commercial introduction. Not only are t-shirts popular with consumers, but screen-printing tech-



The primordial swamp where it all began. © Anheuser-Busch.

nology allows manufacturers the flexibility to react quickly to market changes. These qualities make t-shirts, as well as similar items such as boxer shorts and sleepshirts, core categories for many ad-related licensing programs.

Demand can end as soon as the commercials go off the air, which often occurs without warning...

"It took us awhile to get out on the market with Frogs merchandise," Pfneisel admits, noting that many non-apparel products were not available until the second year. "We've been improving our systems since then. Ideally, we would like to have merchandise in the market at the same time, or shortly after, the campaign is introduced. We are working with the marketing department to get creative direction around the same time TV storyboards are approved. We have to provide the licensees graphics and direction as early as possible, and continue to keep them updated on new graphics that become available, in order to fully maximize the potential of each ad campaign."

The Lizards represented the first time that merchandise associated with an Anheuser-Busch commercial appeared on store shelves concurrently with the premiere of the ad. "We did not have knowledge of what was coming with the Frogs," says Pfneisel. "Now we can go to licensees with a tight creative direction and give them ample time to get the products on the market."

How long a life span will Frogs and Lizards merchandise have? "This is something we, the licensing department, do not have

control over," Pfneisel remarks. "We will continue to leverage the popularity of the Lizards [and Frogs] through licensed merchandise as long as the brand marketing group continues to develop and air the commercials."

Laurie Ann Goldman, director of worldwide licensing for Coca-Cola, points out that it takes two weeks to three months to develop a commercial, but 12 to 18 months to develop and ship a product line. "It's not an ideal situation," she says, noting that temporary compromises are sometimes necessary. Coca-Cola's live-action "Holiday Caravan" ad, for example, featured a group of lighted tractor-trailers decorated with Christmas graphics. Lighted die-cast trucks represented a natural product category, but development time was too long for them to be introduced in conjunction with the first commercial. Instead, licensees used existing molds from other Coca-Cola die-cast trucks and added new graphics; the next season, the line was expanded.

The Lizards represented the first time that merchandise...appeared on store shelves concurrently with the premiere of the ad.

Fitting Ad-Related Merchandise Into the Brand Effort

Brand licensors whose programs already incorporate appropriate categories for ad-related graphics such as t-shirts, gifts, novelties and collectibles usually offer advertising-related opportunities virtually exclusively to existing licensees. Forty percent of Anheuser-Busch's 100 Budweiser licensees are involved with the Frogs and Lizards, while 50%-75%



Anheuser-Busch uses images like this one of a lizard model to provide licensors with guidance to keep characters "on model." © Anheuser-Busch.

of Coca-Cola licensees sell Polar Bear merchandise.

The short window of opportunity and high sales levels associated with ad campaigns present a far different situation from traditional brand-licensing efforts, which generate relatively steady sales over a long period. "You need to hit the market while the commercial is receiving maximum visibility," says Pfneisel. "This is not the case with our core line of merchandise."

One danger perceived by brand licensors is that a hot advertising character could oversaturate the market and dilute the core brand, the company's greatest asset. "With Spuds McKenzie, Anheuser-Busch reacted to an opportunity without much planning or tactical strategy," Pfneisel remarks. "With the Frogs, Lizards and other more recent ad-related graphics, we have been more selective about choosing the proper product lineup and licensees with the most appropriate distribution channels, to maximize our potential while still protecting the integrity of the brand image. With Spuds, the primary objective was to maximize revenue potential. With the campaigns of the '90s,

the emphasis is more on enhancing the brand image, while still maximizing revenue potential.”

Forty percent of Anheuser-Busch's 100 Budweiser licensees are involved with the Frogs and Lizards...

In the case of companies without existing brand-licensing programs, licensors or their agents must create ad-related licensing efforts from scratch. The same is true for licensors with existing programs that involve very different product categories than would be relevant for commercial icons. For example, Taco Bell had previously licensed products to be used for cooking and serving Mexican foods—categories that are not a natural fit for the Chihuahua.

Susan Eisner, vice president of licensing for Leisure Concepts, Duracell's licensing agent, says, “It's a challenge working with a packaged goods company. Their focus is really on getting their products out.” She adds that while a corpo-

ration may want to catch the wave while its ad campaign is popular, its attention is focused on other aspects of its business, especially if it does not have in-house personnel dedicated to licensing.

“At Taco Bell, licensing is still new,” remarks Bill O'Rourke, director of brand licensing at Hakan & Associates, the company's licensing agency. “We are in a hothouse type of environment. We have to get their comfort level up.”

“No one creates a campaign for its licensing potential,” says Seth Siegel, co-chairman of The Beanstalk Group, licensing agent for Wendy's during the “Where's the Beef?” craze. Siegel points out that the overall objectives for the brand do not necessarily match licensees' objectives. When Wendy's discontinued the “Where's the Beef?” campaign after four months to avoid burnout, licensees were left with excess inventory. In retrospect, however, Siegel believes that the decision to end the commercials was the right one from the point

of view of the brand. “What business are you [the corporate licensor] in?,” he asks. “The business of creating a new cultural icon or of advertising your brand?”

Some licensors consider advertising imagery to be part of their overall property portfolio. The commercial icons are used as additional graphics over time, rather than licensed separately as short-term phenomena. For example, Pillsbury extensively merchandises the Pillsbury Doughboy, and Campbell's Soup the Campbell Kids as components of their overall licensing strategies.

Goldman reports that, while Coca-Cola incorporates most ad graphics into its broader licensing strategy, there are occasional exceptions. A Diet Coke ad in the early 1990s, which starred a hunky construction worker named Lucky, became popular among women aged 25 to 35. “This was not going to become a long-term enduring icon of the Coca-Cola company,” admits Goldman. Still, the company authorized a select line of products, including mouse pads and calendars.

Despite the challenges, there are benefits to licensing commercial images. Licensing ad-related graphics and phrases generates ancillary revenue for the company. It also spreads awareness. “Licensed products are a means to extend the brand advertising message beyond the :30-:60 TV commercial spots,” says Pfneisel. (Licensing may also be necessary for trademark protection.)

The popularity of ad-related images can boost the success of corporate-logoed products as well. “We feel that the overall awareness of Budweiser licensing has risen in the consumer's mind



An example of an animated ad character with longevity is Pillsbury's extensively-merchandised Pillsbury Doughboy. © The Pillsbury Co.

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as a result of the popularity of the ad-related licensed merchandise," Pfneisel reports, noting that in 1995, after the introduction of Frogs merchandise, the total Budweiser licensing program grew more than 50%, with 21% of total revenue coming from Frogs merchandise.

Broadcast Schedules Determine International Potential

Rarely does a company use the same advertising campaign

throughout the world. Even in cases when a similar campaign is broadcast in different countries, popularity varies. Therefore, ad-related licensing efforts are typically limited to one or a few countries, rather than being extended worldwide.

Coca-Cola has established merchandising programs in 40 countries and licenses some of its commercial campaigns internationally. The Polar Bears are merchandised in some territories, as is

the Coca-Cola Santa. Products based on Coca-Cola's football-(soccer-)themed advertising—which takes advantage of the popularity of the World Cup but is not officially tied to that event—is more popular abroad than in the U.S., particularly in Latin America, Europe and Asia.

Licensing for the Budweiser Frogs and Lizards is centered in the U.S., although satellite spill-over into Canada has led to some merchandise sales there; some demand also exists in Canada for "I Love You, Man" products. Anheuser-Busch is looking into the possibility of extending the Lizard commercials into international territories.

Karen Raugust is the author of several books and reports on licensing and entertainment, including The Licensing Business Handbook, International Licensing: A Status Report (both available from EPM Communications, New York) and Merchandise Licensing for the Television Industry (available from Focal Press, Newton, Mass.). She also writes about licensing, animation and other topics for publications including The Hollywood Reporter, Publishers Weekly and Animation Magazine, and acts as a consultant to the licensing and entertainment industries. She is the former executive editor of The Licensing Letter.

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Selected Licensing Programs Inspired by Advertising Campaigns

by Karen Raugust

Following are some of the licensing efforts based on animated and live-action advertising campaigns over the last 20 years.

California Raisins

The California Raisins, the group of Motownesque, “I Heard It Through The Grapevine”-singing, Claymation characters created by Foote, Cone & Belding and animated by Will Vinton Studios for the California Raisin Board, were a fad in 1987 and generated one of the biggest ad-related licensing campaigns ever, totaling an estimated \$500 million in retail sales in about a year. Products included virtually every category and were popular with all ages; among the leading items were plush dolls, plastic figurines and other gifts and collectibles. A series of Hardee’s promotions involving California Raisin premiums were among that fast-food chain’s most successful ever.

Where’s the Beef?

In 1984, the phrase “Where’s the Beef?” permeated all facets of U.S. society, thanks to a commercial for the Wendy’s quick-service restaurant chain starring octogenarian Clara Peller. The



The California Raisins generated one of the biggest ad-related licensing campaigns ever. Image courtesy of Will Vinton Studios.

licensing effort lasted just four months—the amount of time that the commercials were on the air—

The California Raisins were a fad in 1987 and generated one of the biggest ad-related licensing campaigns ever, totaling an estimated \$500 million...

but the merchandise managed to generate more than \$70 million in retail sales in that short time, according to Seth Siegel, co-chairman of The Beanstalk Group, licensing agent for Wendy’s. As soon as the tag-line had become a craze, Beanstalk was able to line

up five licensing deals within a week and 15 more by the end of the second week. By the end of the program, nearly 40 licensees were on board. The agency had originally been hired to license the Wendy’s logo for kitchen sets, apparel and other products.

Taco Bell Chihuahua

The ad icon of 1998 is the Mexican-accented Taco Bell Chihuahua. The campaign started in fall of 1997 with one commercial, created by advertising agency TBWA Chiat Day. That initial advertisement was followed by several more executions in late 1997 and early 1998. The first merchan-

dise—t-shirts and sleepwear—appeared on retail shelves by March of 1998, followed by posters, a limited range of plush and several other products. As of mid-August, approximately 15 licensees were signed, with more pending, according to Bill O'Rourke, director of brand licensing at Taco Bell's licensing agency, Hakan & Associates. Retail sales for Chihuahua merchandise has exceeded \$25 million in the first six months of the licensing program. (Taco Bell has also authorized products based on its core brand, such as kitchen electrics and serveware.)

Li'l Penny

Li'l Penny, the advertising spokesperson that promotes a line of Nike athletic shoes endorsed by NBA (National Basketball Association) star Anfernee (Penny) Hardaway, has inspired a limited range of products. The main thrust of the program is a line of three dolls from Playmates Toys, including a 14-inch talking version with the voice of Chris Rock, who performs the role in the commercials as well. The spots, which were created by Wieden & Kennedy and feature both Li'l Penny and Hardaway, continue to air.

The ad icon of 1998 is the Mexican-accented Taco Bell Chihua

The Puttermans

The Puttermans, the full-

size, latex-costumed family (including a limbo-dancing granny!) powered by Duracell batteries, were a phenomenon for two years, peaking in 1995. T-shirts and other novelties were licensed at the time in an effort that endured as long as the commercials aired. "Our biggest success was the Halloween costumes with the big Duracell battery on the back," says Susan Eisner, vice president of licensing at Duracell's licensing agency Leisure Concepts. "It was so kitsch, but it tied the equity of the brand with something fun and different."

The licensing effort lasted just four months but the merchandise managed to generate more than \$70 million in retail sales...

Coca-Cola Polar Bears and Other Icons

Coca-Cola has been advertising its brand since the turn of the century and all of its campaigns enter the archives of graphics available for licensing. They include classic images such as Norman Rockwell advertising art and the Coca-Cola Santa, which has been licensed since the early 1980s. In the 1990s, several campaigns have generated licensed products, notably the Coca-Cola Polar Bears, which have been featured in six commercials since 1993 and were first licensed in 1994. Other campaigns include King Coke, the Coca-Cola Ice Cubes and the Coca-Cola Sun, as

well as sports-themed campaigns involving football (soccer), the NBA and the Monsters of the Gridiron, a series of ads supporting a National Football League promotion. Merchandising surrounding some commercial series, such as the Polar Bears and the Sun, are extensive, while other ads are licensed for just a few products; for instance, an "NBA Dancing Clothes" advertisement was authorized for animation cels only, according to Laurie Ann Goldman, director, worldwide licensing.

Karen Raugust is the author of several books and reports on licensing and entertainment, including The Licensing Business Handbook, International Licensing: A Status Report (both available from EPM Communications, New York) and Merchandise Licensing for the Television Industry (available from Focal Press, Newton, Mass.). She also writes about licensing, animation and other topics for publications including The Hollywood Reporter, Publishers Weekly and Animation Magazine, and acts as a consultant to the licensing and entertainment industries. She is the former executive editor of The Licensing Letter.

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Balancing Commercials and Personal Work: Three Directors Speak

compiled by Heather Kenyon

We asked three active commercial directors, who are also simultaneously making their own independent works, how they feel about the contrasts between directing commercials and independent films. Jonathan Hodgson, Aleksandra Korejwo and Bill Plympton all have different views on the relationship between directing these two forms of animation. Many independents find commercial directing a necessity in order to support their own work: is this a curse or a blessing?

I am reluctant to give back too much of my creativity to advertising.

- Jonathan Hodgson

Jonathan Hodgson recently directed another award-winning independent film *Feeling My Way*. His most recent advertising campaign was a string of Bell Atlantic commercials. Aleksandra Korejwo is starting her latest independent work and just won "Best Commercial Film" at the Zagreb World Festival of Animated Film for her *Campbell's Soup* spot. Bill Plympton has directed commercials for 7-Eleven, AT&T, Air Touch Cellular, Taco Bell and many others. His feature film *I Married A Strange Person* is currently enjoying a limited U.S. theatrical release.

Jonathan Hodgson

While I find working in



Jonathan Hodgson's *Feeling My Way*.

advertising can be exciting as a technical challenge, I have seldom worked on a campaign which was creatively or spiritually enriching. Most advertising re-hashes existing ideas rather than coming up with completely original concepts. This practice has often left me feeling artistically impoverished and really only valued for my ability as a technician and diplomat. Having said this I have learned a lot about filmmaking and editing which I have been able to utilize in my own work and, of course, the money one earns from advertising is useful in funding personal projects. However, I am reluctant to give back too much of my creativity to advertising. An artist's vision is a priceless and fragile commodity; a pure flowing spring which can easily dry up or be polluted. It should be cherished and nurtured, and not sold off to the highest bidder.

Aleksandra Korejwo

Before I started with commercials I had made several award-winning films involving classical music. When I met Ron Diamond for the first time at the International Animation Film Festi-

val in Annecy, he said to me, "You have to know that making commercials is different from making your own films." Today I am very grateful to Ron Diamond at Acme Filmworks for carefully guiding me through the commercial world.

My first commercial assignment was four animation films for the Austin Lyric Opera in Texas. I remember my first conference calls...It was a great experience for me to share my own vision, my own point of view with other creative people. It always reminds me of the discussions we had at the Academy of Fine Arts. I suddenly realized that commercials open my eyes to new ideas and horizons. For my own films I only have to look inside of myself. With commercials I need to understand the client's point of view. I need to listen, listen, listen!



Aleksandra Korejwo.

After this production Ron encouraged me to make my own film, *Impression*, which won several awards. The next commercial I made was for Campbell's Soup and it taught me to be very strict with myself. With commercials, I

cannot change my ideas from the storyboard because once it is approved, the clients are trusting me to do exactly what I said I would do. It was the next lesson in being a commercial film director and animator.

I suddenly realized that commercials open my eyes to new ideas and horizons.

- Aleksandra Korejwo

Sometimes it is possible to make a commercial and be absolutely independent. This happened when I was making the title sequence for the Walt Disney Company's film *The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit*, with a screenplay by Ray Bradbury. Brilliant designer Bob Dawson, film director Stuart Gordon, and Roy Disney all gave me a lot of space. They believed that I would make this animation as best as I could, and I did. I think it is very important in commercials for the agency and client to trust the animator/film director.

When I come back from the commercial animation world to my own animation, I am always more rich, my own vision is more

clear and most importantly, my eyes are more open to other people's points of view. I have just started animation for both my own film and my next commercial. I think I can say that the structure of commercial-making and the freedom of doing independent films has become a kind of harmonious marriage in my artistic life.

In the end I would like to follow Ray Bradbury's philosophy from his book, *Zen in the Art of Writing*. He gives us three words with which to approach one's life: work, relax and don't think ("which results in greater creativity")! Lastly, his definition for work — love what you do.

I look at commercials solely as a vehicle by which to finance my own feature films.

- Bill Plympton

Bill Plympton

I look at commercials solely as a vehicle in which to finance my own feature films. I can't say that they help me learn or improve



Bill Plympton.

as they are often just carrying out exactly what the client wants and expects. Commercials limit you on creativity and often I am contacted due to my signature style — that's what they want, that's what they get. I like doing commercials, don't get me wrong, but I naturally prefer my own feature work. Without commercials I couldn't do that, so they are a necessity, a good means to an end. Plus, it is fun when relatives and friends see my commercial work on television!

Heather Kenyon is editor in chief of Animation World Magazine.

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Here's A How de do Diary: July

by Barry Purves

Editor's Note: Lumps, warts and all, for eight months Barry Purves will share his personal production diary with us for his current project with Channel 4, tentatively titled Here's A How de do. This film will take a look at three men: Gilbert, Sullivan and Richard D'Oyly Carte. D'Oyly Carte brought Gilbert and



Barry Purves

Sullivan together and formed the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, which performed Gilbert and Sullivan operas for 100 years. While the trio worked together for roughly 25 years, their relationship was strained at best. How will the production of their story go? All we can do is read along monthly and find out...

June 23rd

So totally tired already. I don't get to sit down all day really. We are going to have a series of work experience people in over the next few weeks which will help with the more time consuming and laborious jobs, but it's a bit pathetic that we have to rely on these people to crew our shoot.

The puppets appeared in fine voice, vibrating beautifully, lips all aquiver, as they hit a high note. Unfortunately, we had the usual problem of these puppets, of the neck rubber popping out of the collars. This did get sorted out, but there will still be a few frames with nasty goings on in the neck area.

My mind is so full of G & S stuff that I have no space for anything else, and keep losing important things like my camera or a check. Or is this just age...

My Japanese friend in Hamamatsu City, Saemi, is always finding amazingly relevant things to send me. Today I received

a poster for "Warship Pinafore." Saemi is going to see it next month, so I can't wait to hear what she thinks. I wonder how such Western music sounds to Eastern ears, or will they orchestrate it accordingly?

Of all animation, puppets have some spontaneity to them.

June 24th

A mammoth 13 seconds has left me exhausted, and way behind with all the other work that needs to be done for the coming episodes. I should do at least two hours a night after shooting, but I really am too drained.

I think it was a good day - after a rather bland shot of Carte yesterday, Gilbert suddenly did a gesture that was beautifully timed, concise and spoke volumes. That does not happen often, and should the rushes be faulty, I would not be able to repeat it.

Work-related things not to do with filming keep demanding my attention, but I cannot give it. I must be so focused otherwise this film will not happen (or am I using this obsession with the filming to shirk other responsibilities - I hope not). There's a few problems with the puppets, with mouth cavities coming unstuck (it's those high notes that literally put too much strain on the mouth), and the white paint getting grubby. Sadly, there is little time/money for maintenance, but we'll see what we can do.

June 25th

Five shots and 11 seconds and still not enough for our schedule - this is too much.

I think I'm probably frustrating Jean-Marc as he does like to know exactly where each puppet will be on which precise frame. Sadly, I don't work like that. Oh yes, of course, I've spent months planning every move, and exactly how much plot must be got across in each shot, but when I start, the puppets lead me in various directions. If a pose is looking good I might decide to make the most of it, and sacrifice another pose. Of all animation, puppets have some spontaneity to them.

My animation, within certain guidelines, is quite organic. I'm not very good at repeating shots as they would never turn out the same. I gather on the *Nightmare Before Christmas* and *James and the Giant Peach* films, each shot had a couple of

rehearsals and so forth - I'd find that hard. My animation does have a lot of rough edges and is pretty raw, but it certainly has this spontaneous energy. Of course, I would love to lose those raw edges...

I gather on the Nightmare Before Christmas and James and the Giant Peach films, each shot had a couple of rehearsals and so forth - I'd find that hard.

Most people are down at Cardiff for the Animation Festival. I've never felt too comfortable at that festival, or is it sour grapes because I have never been asked to do anything by the big festival at home? Sour grapes definitely!!!

June 26th

An epic shot involving two camera movements, and the chaps moving but being very low-key. The slow movements really are so much harder to control. I still find it difficult to let a puppet just sit there.

A bit of a setback however. We got our third set of rushes back, and just trying to get to see them on the Steenbeck was like an over elaborate episode of *Mission: Impossible*. Seeing these rushes and the ones from earlier this week for the first time was a little disappointing. They are really too dark and gloomy. We can't reshoot them, but I think I can make it work. Poor Jean-Marc is very upset - it's not his fault, maybe I've given him too many directions. It's clear, however, that trying to scrimp on important things like being able to see the rushes on a regular basis is dangerous. There's

no doubt that this problem could have been spotted earlier and a lot of angst avoided. There was also one reshoot due to accidentally leaving on a working light (this is necessary because the recording device we have cannot cope with our light levels). This really is filmmaking with my hands tied. I am exasperated from being told that we can't afford it! I felt the film slipping away tonight.

June 28th

In to work to do the reshoot of Gilbert looking haughty. It was not as good second time round of course. Also we set the new lighting state and did the shot with the change. I hope I am not making matters worse now. I should have made use of the fact that D'Oyly Carte introduced, for the first time, electricity into theatres. I could have had him, as he did before the first performance of *Patience*, holding a light bulb. This could explain the sudden lighting change. Hopefully, I have made it work. All this is because we are so stuck for cash that we cannot send off rushes frequently enough, let alone look at them. Part of me really would like to give up all this nonsense and just go and work for a big company where I am a small cog in a large machine. OK, so I would not do my own films, but already this film is running away from how I saw it due to the lack of sufficient back-up. This may be my fault for not spelling everything out. I assume people know how to do certain obvious things.

Heard lots of anecdotes from Cardiff, especially about my mad stalker who was embarrassing everyone. Animation attracts

people who are crazy about the stuff, and people who are just crazy. I've asked some people with responsible positions, and some whom I work with, what films they had liked at the festival: "Oh, we didn't see any films, we just got pissed!" Say no more.

June 29th

Got the required footage out, but sadly no inspired animation. I don't get a break between shots as there's so much to do with the camera and all. I keep finding myself in front of the ready shot and thinking, "Oh yes, now what am I doing?"

Had a visit from a very sprightly Heather Kenyon, on a whirlwind trip of the Manchester animation community. There is a surprising amount of us up here.

In terms of the story, Gilbert and Sullivan are currently being persuaded to work together thanks to a large handful of cash, and some rather basic clumsy animation. The puppets could already do with a good overhaul. They are exhausted and they are not the only ones.

Tuesday 30th

Last day of the month, and months do not come more stressful than this. Fortunately, the rushes were great this morning. The new lighting looks just right and we can see every detail of the puppets. (They did have a quick hair and make-up job this morning; so particular, like actors!) We were down to our last chocolate biscuit this morning, but fortunately glamorous Karen breezed in with bags full of goodies. It's so easy to forget to eat, but she keeps an eye on us.

We are well past two minutes now, but were slowed down today by setting up a complicated Pepper's Ghost effect of Carte conjuring up the image of the Savoy theatre. If I'm being honest we could have probably done it by simply bringing up the lights on a flat piece of artwork. But by shooting it through a piece of glass, I hope to make it a little insubstantial. It would really work if I had time to walk one of the characters behind the 'vision' - but I don't have time. I can't think of "what ifs."

Peter Dodd is with us for a few days on work experience, and has thrown himself into it with gusto. With him speaking Danish on the phone, and Jean-Marc French, we are pretty international.

I'm still anxious to see it all cut together, but all those people who gathered round the Steenbeck this morning thought something exciting was happening. Let's hope so. Sue said that this was clearly one of my films. I think that was a compliment. Nick, the designer, called in for the first time in a few weeks, and I was pleased he was pleased.

July 1st

We cut the rushes together last night on the Steenbeck and guess what? It works. We haven't laid the music to it yet, but it charges along, with a good rhythm, and we have found enough ways to make a single bed look interesting. Some of the colors are quite glorious. Some of the animation could be a little more refined, but it's quite bold and witty.

A good chat to Clare Kitson

today, bringing her up to date with encouraging news of the film. I suggested a new title to her: *Gilbert and Sullivan - The Very Models*. It hints at G & S as well as animation, and some sort of standards. She quite likes this, but we are both amazed that we are still having these conversations.

Part of me really would like to give up all this nonsense and just go and work for a big company where I am a small cog in a large machine.

Out of rather drastic compromise, came a piece of rather funny business. Our camera was not able to cope with a move I was trying to do (unfortunately, we are basically stuck with one axis only), so I had to divide the shot of all of them going through their vaudevillian-type handshaking routine, into two parts. Trying to find a reason for the cut, as I have to do, I came up with a fresh piece of humor. There, you never know, necessity really is the mother of invention. This change, of course, led to some wasted time and a late night, but it was worth it.

There is pressure on me from certain sources to keep these diaries free of criticism, in case I present the wrong image. The wrong image would be to present filmmaking as an easy, stress-free occupation. These diaries are not an advertisement for me, my ego, or any personal grudges. Hopefully, they may suggest to anyone approaching animation for the first time just how complex the whole process is. To those already animating, there may be a touch

of, "Thank heavens - I'm not the only one!" I hope too, that they show how much work, dedication and passion has to go into a film. I really hope (how many times can I use this word) that these are of some use first, and interest, second. I find it therapeutic. I've kept a diary for 35 years and never missed a day. Now those ones are honest!!!

July 2nd

After working so late last night, I was not really prepared for the shots today, and did some less than wonderful animation. Well, I'll just have to live with that. As I had my hands on the puppets, I had that awful feeling, the equivalent of stage fright, where I did not know what I was doing. I was just moving limbs for the sake of moving something. I'd not had time to think it through. However, the music carries it off.

My old students came to watch for a bit today. I could see them looking out for all the points I'd instilled in them.

July 3rd

Karen's and my birthday today. There were numerous visitors to the set. I've come away with some huge bunches of flowers. Sadly, I do not have my mother's talent for flower arranging. Such wonderful smells filled the studio.

My last birthday was spent in Seattle at the Masters of Animation week-end, giving a talk with, amongst others, Ray Harryhausen and Henry Selick. That was a real thrill, though I honestly felt the cuckoo in the nest.

Sandra Dugdale, our soprano, also came to the set

today. It must have been odd for her to hear her voice coming out of Gilbert's mouth.

We were slowed down by the costume changes, but suddenly there is Gilbert dressed as Sir Joseph, Carte as Dick Deadeye and Sullivan a very fetching Little Buttercup. They look wonderful, particularly Gilbert. I adore costumes so much. I love the textures and detail and what they can say about character, but, heavens, they do make life difficult. Hats make the head so hard to turn, as there suddenly becomes nowhere to hold, and dresses, well, they are the worst. This is one of the reasons why my *Achilles* puppets were naked. They were a joy to work with - real hand to hand (and buttock!) contact. Direct communication. I've yet to see a convincing costume, especially period costume, with CG. I'm sure I'll be eating my words soon though.

I'm sad that this sequence (if that is so sing derry down derry) has seen the puppets not being as agile as I, or the music, would have liked, but there are those schedules... However, the music has lifted us all so much. This music just explodes with joy, energy and warmth. It is also so infectious that we all left singing and smiling.

July 6th

Having spent yesterday being battered senseless on every (well, nearly every) roller coaster in Blackpool with my sister and her boys, I was a little tender this morning, and could not get going too easily

at work. Still a day away from the puppets worked wonders.

Rushes back today. We still have not been able to cut them together however. A token glare from somewhere on one frame is causing a problem. How it is there for only one frame I don't know, but I know I chose the worst shot possible for it to appear on. I can't reshoot it, as it was the shot of Sullivan changing into *Little Buttercup*, and that was a nightmare. I'll see if I can snip one frame out, but this could ruin the already rushed animation and put the lip synch out.

We spent the day setting up for the epic transformation into *Pinafore*. It explodes with light, but the shot will not betray the amount of work that has gone into it. I hope it finishes this episode with a good, satisfying cadenza. We were, of course, handicapped by not having enough lights to go from one lighting state to another, but ingenuity has won out; a good bit of effing and blinding also helped us get there. It looks great but we've not shot a frame today and that's

not great.

July 7th

A good day with an epic shot. I even managed some reasonable animation. I got a little ratty as the concentration required to sustain such a complicated shot as the transformation into *Pinafore* is enormous. The slightest change of my rhythm can put me off, and one duff frame... Fortunately, I had an assistant today, one of my ex students. That relieved a lot of pressure. I can't now brag that I have animated everything in all my films.

Here's a dilemma: a colleague has been asking me for reference books about a particular subject, as he is trying to get a film off the ground. With the help of Cosgrove Hall, he probably will. Unfortunately, I feel mighty possessive about this particular subject, as the principal character is my alter-ego. I have been trying to get a film made about him for nearly two decades. This character is so right for one of my films, and I would hate to see someone get there before me and blow my chances. Do I lend the books?

Well, who knows. I may not even be animating after this film. I have been asked to direct a play in Moscow about a Jewish violinist. I do not have much in common there, but if animation is not giving me the chance to do what I want, i.e. work with a certain caliber of artists and materials, with a decent schedule, maybe this is another option.



AWM editor-in-chief Heather Kenyon visited Barry's studio after the Cardiff festival in July. Photo courtesy of Barry Purves.

July 8th

I could hardly move after the rigors of yesterday's very taxing epic shot. It still looks quite good on the video. There was another long shot for me today; 13 seconds of talking heads. After all the singing and orchestra, mere speech sounded a little dull and flat, however witty, "What never? No never. What never? Well hardly ever," was. Not my favorite shot, but it tells a bit of plot. I did struggle to get through it, and was sad that my animation was little more than head and flappy wrist acting. One day, I would love an easier schedule to see what I really am capable of.

There is pressure on me from certain sources to keep these diaries free of criticism, in case I present the wrong image.

I've just been to see *Love and Death on Long Island* and loved every second of it. Gently paced, and very witty. The director Richard, a friend of mine, kept cutting away to objects and other seemingly irrelevant things. The effect was tremendous. With my animation I'm always scared to cut away from the characters, as every second is so valuable. Also, the early films I worked on were full of ghastly static close-ups of books about to be picked up, or door knobs about to be turned. Hideous stuff, and since then I've been frightened of such close-ups.

July 9th

No filming today, and I can hear the tick tock of the schedule screaming in my ears. However we had to cut Episode One

together. I had to see that the lip synch was working and that there were enough frames. Guess what? It was and there were! More than that, it's not a bad three-minute little film. There's quite a few visual peaks, and a few moments I'm enjoying watching again. The story seems clear. Well, there's this man in bed, and two other men come along who don't seem too keen on each other. The first man offers the others some money, and they get writing. Then, a huge boat comes along and they all dance around. Perfectly clear. It says Gilbert and Sullivan to me. There's masses of work to do on the grading to get the colors consistent, and quite a few sound effects and grunts and groans to add to help things along, but one thing is clear. It has energy, which is so often lacking in puppet animation. It does look rich, and so what if there are a few cheesy moments - in the context of things, it works. I like their hornpipe very much. It was so simple but fits the music perfectly. There is always such a thrill for me, when some visuals make me listen to the music in a new way, and vice versa.

This rough editing took most of the day, and we had to strike Pinafore and get back to the normal state. We were just getting there, when the camera tripod keeled over, and broke a wooden leg. A bit of a disaster really, plus it is sad to think of all the things that tripod must have witnessed, only to end up in a small studio in Moss Side. Oh, the glamour of filmmaking.

On to Episode Two, with a new confidence, knowing that what I'm doing will work.

July 10th

New camera legs, and a new episode. There's been a lot of marvelous feedback from the few people I showed Episode One to yesterday. Mark Hall was, in particular, bubbling away about it. I'd certainly like to go back to Cosgrove Hall, if the project was right. Ironically, today Channel Five was showing my episode of *Wind in the Willows* where Toad performs *The Pirates of Penzance* in his gardens - the wheel comes full circle.

Poor Jean-Marc is having real problems with the simplicity of the equipment available to him. Just a simple track back becomes a nightmare, reframing and refocusing as we go, and that ain't easy with what we have. A track we did today had a definite dip in it as our floor is hardly straight. Fortunately, it matched a swooping phrase in the music and seems to work. The music carries everything along with it.

I've yet to see a convincing costume, especially period costume, with CG.

In today's shot, all 13 seconds of it, I tried to bring out the complex rhythm with the animation. My head was ready to explode, but I so enjoy listening to the music a frame at a time, and hearing how it is constructed, how phrases become questions, and then answers. It is all mathematics basically, but it is so satisfying to have the patterns unraveled before me. I think, well I hope, that all I have done on this film so far respects Sullivan's music and Gilbert's words. Even after hearing

a section three hundred times, as I have today, there is something so right about the words and the music, that I still do not tire of them.

July 13th

Two good shots, and one absolutely dire one, but there we go. One of the good ones saw me animating the melody, and also the counterpoint tune underneath. The two different rhythms were doing my head in. Just as it was going quite well, it all went slightly wrong, and some of the music on the barsheet was way out. So there was a bit of swearing by me, and some quick thinking on my feet. Hopefully, I have saved the shot of the three men signing the contracts, but it was not as I had intended.

Rye Hannah is with us on work experience this week and has been a great help. I feel that to some extent, I am on show with my every move being scrutinized. All these work experience people aren't exactly taking notes, but with whatever reputation I have, I feel I have to be on my best behavior and not take too many shortcuts. Still, it is very flattering to have them wanting to watch me. It must be so boring!!!

July 14th

A good day, with a decent amount of footage, and some interesting animation. Gilbert is now off pontificating about his own merits. I think this is going to be quite a musical episode. Part of me is wishing that I had the courage to film it like a music video, or like Bob Fosse in *Cabaret*, with fast cutting, and close-ups of hands being flicked

out. This would totally drag G & S screaming into the new millennium, but I don't think it would be fair to them. Hopefully, what I am doing is bringing out the structure of the words and music. Besides there is too much plot to get across. There is nothing in these films for the sake of simply liking the music. Every note has been chosen because it says something about their lives, their work, or relationship. In such short films, I can't go off into plotless choreographic fantasies. There, I've talked myself out of that one! I wish I had someone that knew what I was trying to do, as intimately as I do. I need someone at the early stages to bounce ideas off.

I fear I am now obsessed with this film. Everything revolves around it. I was even playing *The Gondoliers* in the car.

Incidentally, my horoscope for the day said that I must recognize that I urgently need to have a little time to think.

July 15th

Did a complicated piece of choreography with Gilbert, that didn't quite come off, but still it's not too bad. Dance in animation is such an odd thing. It very rarely works. The whole thing about dance when you see it live is that you know the dancers are conquering gravity; we are aware of the effort involved to make a jump so high with so much grace. If you remove the element of gravity, as in an animated film, dance suddenly looks rather contrived. Too often animators rotoscope dancers, and that looks awful, as the timing is all wrong. Animators

need to emphasize the pose and the weight, but that can even make the dance rather odd.

A good thirteen seconds was done. Though, on a couple of moments, I suddenly looked at the characters and thought, 'I don't know what to do with you.' A bit of a nightmare, but as soon as I started I found a reason for everything. Gilbert has now done his solo, and, boy, is he glad to get rid of that clumsy large music score. Props do get in the way, as do costumes. What a joy it was to have the naked puppets in *Achilles*. I could really control those.

July 16th

Trevor Nunn's production of *Oklahoma!* opened at the National Theatre last night to rave reviews. I get so excited when old war-horses like this are reinvented as though we have never had to sit through them before. From all accounts it is visually ravishing and he has brought out the drama and psychology of the piece. I would love the chance to get my hands on a dusty work that has been ruined by countless amateur performances. I'm often asked about my influences, and I think I'm expected to say George Pal or Harryhausen (and yes, of course, I've been influenced by them and admire them enormously), but I have to say that the biggest influences on my work have come from the theatre, especially Trevor Nunn's legendary *Nicholas Nickleby*. Something really clicked with me. I can honestly say that it changed my life. A great work of art was made accessible, exciting and so damn fresh. That's what I would like to do, thank you. It is

about time that Gilbert and Sullivan were given this dusting down, and maybe Mike Leigh's film about them next year will have this effect. I don't think my film will have any effect as so few people will get to see it.

Rather too many visitors today but it was good to see Paul Berry. We sat chatting away about animation, bubbling with mutual respect. We still have not really worked together after knowing each other for 15 years. I think we would be a good combination, though I think he would find it hard to work at my pace and with my budgets now. He was amazed at the lack of staff and equipment with which we are doing this film. (I've just seen his huge cheese commercial. Wow!!!) Paul is used to features and the luxuries of commercials.

Twelve seconds a day is a real killer. I was rushing a bit today, and not thinking clearly. To save time the *Wandering Minstrel* sequence is being shot out of order, and I hate this, as all flow is disrupted. Incidentally, my horoscope for the day said that I must recognize that I urgently need to have a little time to think. Imagine you are trying to write a poem, it said, while the neighbors are having a noisy party. How true, how true...

A fax from a big studio in America got me intrigued and excited and flattered, but I have not been able to act on it yet.

July 17th

We were feeling a little smug (which is tempting fate) as we have managed a whole minute of film this week, and are subsequently, totally shattered. I

then made the mistake of playing the complete soundtrack. It went on forever and ever. What we have done seems only a minute fraction.

I do not know how I am going to film another 11 minutes in only 11 weeks. The puppets and costumes are already in need of repair and new skins, but to take them off set means the camera stops rolling. (Although, I hesitate to call an animation camera's action "rolling." It is more of a spasmodic twitching.)

As I was busy with Sullivan, both Jean-Marc and Rye fell asleep in the heat of the studio. Seeing them nod off, I quickly made Gilbert nod off as he sat behind Sullivan. Clearly, Gilbert is not impressed with Sullivan's music.

Not much inspired animation otherwise, but I'm still smiling at one gesture with Sullivan yesterday, that totally encapsulated the essence of a conductor and composer - very simple and clear, and above all, musical.

July 20th

A good set of rushes, reasonable animation (film is so forgiving), and lit cleanly and consistently. We only get one sneak look at them, as we are still waiting for the Steenbeck promised us months ago (as well as a capable video recorder, but heigh ho...). Nor have I been able to cut them together to see if they fit the music, as we are allowed access to an editor only at the end of an episode. Yes, I do sound disgruntled. Still, it was good to see such a long chunk of animation.

A long static shot today, so I was left to get on with it. Jean-Marc still had energy in the

evening and was disappointed that I did not want to carry on. I don't think he realizes the hours of work I have to do every night, so that I can walk into the studio and keep everything going without losing any time. It's now after midnight as I write this about what I have to do tomorrow, but it's taken a good few hours of pacing 'round my room (much to the amusement of the cats).

We have a new work experience lady today, Lucie, who though only 18, showed an enthusiasm and interest that I've not seen in many her age. Plus, she'd seen *Oklahoma!* on Saturday. It certainly does sound so exciting and innovative, and not a gingham frock anywhere. I love things that break years of convention. The dream is danced by the same actress who plays Laurie all night! There is no dancer specifically for the dream sequence...she is one and the same for the first time! Of course, it makes sense, but then this is Trevor Nunn who said, "Why should Peter Pan be played by a woman?" and changed that ludicrous convention. Good on you, Trevor.

I've hopefully organized for the puppets to have an overhaul at the weekend, as they are showing the strain.

July 21st

Worked like crazy today, with some 14 seconds done. Some quite energetic stuff of Gilbert and Sullivan shouting at each other, with poor Carte caught in the middle. I must be careful that I do not rely too heavily on pointing and other cheap

mime tricks, otherwise it will end up looking like a bad production of *Giselle*, where they mime for hours instead of getting on and dancing.

I've hopefully organized for the puppets to have an overhaul at the weekend, as they are showing the strain. I can't take them off set without stopping the filming, as they are all in nearly every shot. They do need a good clean and touch-up, with all their joints pulled straight. Gilbert did this flamboyant gesture today, showing his palm in close-up - yikes!!! His fingers were somewhat rough, and worn away, so I quickly developed the gesture into something else, and happily, it worked.

I'm pleased with this sequence of "Conceive me if you can" - as it really does follow the musical structure beautifully, as well as telling the story clearly.

I looked at the puppets, and didn't seem to know them, let alone know what I was doing.

July 22nd

We nearly lost our Lucie last night, due to a potentially unpleasant situation as she waited for a bus. Such is the tone of our neighborhood, and such is the glamour of the movies. She seems okay today.

The characters spent the whole day running or walking around today, which slowed me down enormously, and I didn't enjoy filming at all. I need these puppets overhauled (I need me to be overhauled), but I think that is just an excuse, as I've never been very good at walking. Everything

ends up as more of a hobble, and I watch the characters slowly getting shorter and shorter as their joints get twisted. Walking and running around does, however, liven up the film to no end, especially when it fits the music (not so today). We have just started the Gavotte from *The Gondoliers*, and it is a slow piece - how difficult are slow pieces! The slightest wobble seems so obvious. I might have to rethink this sequence through the night, as I can't afford the time to do so much walking around. I'll find a way of giving the impression they are walking around...But look at the clock. It's already nearly midnight. Curses. Good job I don't have a life or anything normal like a relationship.

July 23rd

I don't know what happened to me today, but I fell off the high wire. I went through the animator's equivalent of an actor dying on stage. I looked at the puppets, and didn't seem to know them, let alone know what I was doing. I had started this Gavotte sequence with high hopes, and could see it clearly in my head. But three slowly dancing figures having spasms... Eventually, at least a dozen seconds into it, I threw up my hands and abandoned it. Gilbert and Sullivan are now watching Carte walk around, as they bitch to each other. It actually works for the story, but is not as exciting as I had hoped. The ability to make every shot interesting left me, and I experienced some terror of not being able to come up with anything. I suppose there must be some still moments, but I do not like having too many shots of talking heads, nor do I like hav-

ing to change a sequence that's been in my head for months. Anyway, I climbed back on the high wire, having no back-up of course. I'm working blind.

I hate to be seen to have faltered, but the pressure of the shoot, the worries about related things away from the studio (and there are lots of those), the constant battle with technology, or the lack of it, and the necessity of being creatively one hundred percent the whole time is difficult. It's not un-enjoyable, but it is difficult, and it overwhelmed me today. This really has to be the last film I animate on. There are so many better animators than me, and to do everything is just too much. Hopefully, this hiccup has gone, and I'll be fresh tomorrow. Otherwise, there will be some serious soul-searching.

July 24th

Now a third of the way through, and we were all on a downer today. As I always do, equating it to theatre, I suppose we've reached that stage in a long run where we've lost sight of things a bit, and are in awe of the time still to come. This will pass. We were all a bit tetchy, but we must get on with it. So we don't have the best equipment or largest crew or best facilities, that is our lot, but we are doing pretty damn well with what we have. I did have to laugh at one point today, where everything that could have conspired against me getting any footage out did - puppets falling to pieces, me falling to pieces, the camera falling to pieces, but hey, there's another 11 seconds. All this insecurity of course, will not show on film. I

watched the footage so far with a visitor, and saw it through his eyes. It does work, and charges along. It is an odd film without a doubt, and I do make certain assumptions - mainly that people are concentrating and don't miss a note or frame. I think I'm disappointed that I have not pushed the movement and some design elements to their extreme. However, it would not work to dress Little Buttercup like a mobile supermarket, which is, in effect, what she is, if no-one knows who Buttercup is to begin with. Dare I assume that most of the audience are aware of Gilbert and Sullivan at least? I would have liked more dance in this film, and I know I could be capable of complex and witty dance, but it is that time curse again. I do have to go for the short cuts sadly.

The ability to make every shot interesting left me, and I experienced some terror of not being able to come up with anything.

July 27th

Had my hair cut for the first time since February. What a few months these have been, and how cathartic it was to have the hair cut. Getting rid of so much by association. We were all, thankfully, refreshed by a weekend away from the now rather stuffy and smelly set. The puppets are a little cleaner, but I'm not sure I was particularly inspired today. I can't blame the music or anything. It's just a rather quiet sequence before the energy of the *Mikado* sequence. It looks dull now but will work in context. It's dull really

because I got myself trapped with a bit of clumsy business with some papers.

Carte is waving a music sheet from *Patience* and I suddenly remembered when at the age of 12 or 13, I won a G & S crossword puzzle with this clue "What is needed when cine tape gets muddled?" - *Patience*. Was I really into G & S so early? I did see my very first G & S opera when I was eight. All a bit frightening in what that says about me.

Had a good chat to the conductor of *Showboat*, David A., about things ranging from Wagner to *Miss Saigon's* helicopters. I may not be able to talk about current affairs but I can certainly hold my own when it comes to the arts. Sadly, animation is too often seen, not by David though, as a quaint impostor in such circles.

July 28th

Nineteen exhausting seconds, which left me with bleeding feet from all the pacing up and down, and rather more worryingly, some blind spots in my vision from facing bright lights at close proximity for nearly thirteen hours. The remedy for this I found was sitting on the toilet quietly with a T-shirt over my head. I was worried when I couldn't see my bar sheets. Perhaps someone could invent a pair of blinkers for me.

What a long and busy day. I got to the end of this gavotte and I'm afraid it's a rather dull scene. However, it works as a breather before the burst of color and movement that will hopefully be the *Mikado*. This is so true of a lot of animation - when I do a move it sometimes looks too extreme, but it's only when I've gone past it sev-

eral frames, that it suddenly makes sense. You do need to look at the larger scheme of things.

We've got a lovely university drama student, Ellen, with us this week. She didn't stay with us for the length of this epic shot, as she had to make a fake pregnant belly for a play. I'm glad I don't live in the real world.

We were all, thankfully, refreshed by a weekend away from the now rather stuffy and smelly set.

July 29th

A good day, with 13 more seconds thrown out, but look at the state of me. I'm wrecked. Everyday like this is a marathon. Thirteen hours at the studio without sitting down, and two hours work back home, leaves me eventually with five to sleep. That is not enough, but, hey, today has been manic, but fun. Three, not so little maids arrived from school, and are now charging around the set at great speed. The contrast with last week's gavotte makes absolute sense now. The enormous amount of detailed work that Wyn and I did in those early days of trying to find the right shape and pacing in each episode really works. Well, Wyn knows what he's doing, though I have a sneaking suspicion he does not quite have the passion for G & S that I do. I hope it's not long before he and I are bent over another music score, discussing the structure of such and such a phrase.

We left the studio skipping (in spite of the bleeding feet again), as this music bubbles along with wit and good humor

(Mr. Gilbert's words) as does, I think, the film. Dressed in their ravishing and witty kimonos the three men make a striking image. Episode Two is about to finish with a bang (though I'm not sure that's the right musical expression). To all the students I've ever taught, I apologize now. I'm afraid I pushed these puppets, as there was no way I could animate the legs under those kimonos. So I slid them round the set at manic speed, but in the context of excited, young, clichéd Japanese "maids," it looks alright. The music will carry it.

For all our 13 hours work, we only managed seven seconds - an action-packed seven seconds though.

For all our 13 hours work, we only managed 7 seconds - an action-packed 7 seconds though.

July 30th

I've just crawled home, my poor legs giving way under me. We had the added hurdle of enormous heat today, as we transformed into the *Mikado* scene. It is bright and colorful. I've probably gone through over four liters of juice, and still I'm dehydrated.

Anyway, I had a good phone call from Clare, with some thankfully, positive feedback. Her comments were helpful and constructive. I am hopeless with people who burst in and give thoughtless and unconsidered opinions, especially when we are at this stage. I do snap then. Anyway, I'm thrilled (and relieved) that Clare likes it so far. I wanted to show down the phone, the scene

before me of the three chaps in frocks. It does look gorgeous, though the transformation was not exactly as I planned it (well, perhaps I had not had time to plan it enough), and I'm afraid the animation is as rough as anything I've done, but it is full of movement.

July 31st

After three very late nights, we all had a bit of a downer today, probably because we have no energy left. There was a lot of tension and we were all snappy. Then the sight of three Victorian gentlemen, dressed in dazzlingly colored kimonos somewhat punctuates the atmosphere.

Rather too many visitors saw me animating one shot on automatic pilot. I don't want to discourage visitors, as people do find it interesting and students particularly get a thrill out of watching us in action as I did when I had the chance to watch any filming years ago. It's also quite good to get some unbiased comments about the film. But I do feel I'm on show and have to go through the whole routine. I looked at the shot afterwards and it was alright. The three men were laughing at each other in their kimonos, but Gilbert's wrist got twisted the wrong way, as his gesture became, unfortunately, one of an insulting limp wrist kind. Not what I had intended at all.

Production stills are causing some concern just now. As always we do not have the time to set up things for the express purpose of a still, so they have to be snatched when I feel it looks right, but then the huge camera is in the way, and we can't get what is seen

through the view finder. When we get them back, they are lacking the strength of pose of whatever we've seen on film.

I'm sitting here late on Friday with my head swimming. It has been a long week, but the number of hours worked is not necessarily relevant to the quality of the work. That, under these circumstances, is simply how long it takes.

It all looks quite rosy as I have my hand wrapped around Gilbert, but there are so many rumblings elsewhere that I either don't know how to sort out or do not have the time, but (as we sing in the next episode), "Oh don't the days seem lank and long, when all goes right and nothing goes wrong, and isn't your life extremely flat with nothing whatever to grumble at." That's one of my favorite quotes, so pardon me if I keep quoting it. But dammit, G & S had enormous ups and downs, and their work was good, and that really is all that matters.

Read Barry's previous monthly diaries in *Animation World Magazine*, starting with the June, 1998 issue:

(<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.5/3.5pages/3.5purvesdiary.html>).

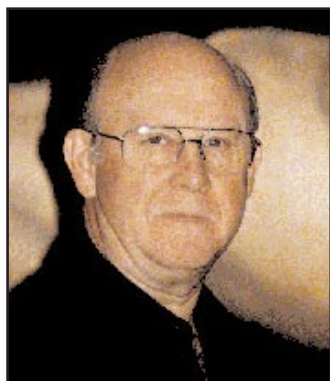
Barry Purves is a Manchester-based filmmaker. Through his production company, Bare Boards Productions, he has directed several stop-motion animated films and commercials, including Next, Screen Play, Rigoletto and Achilles.

Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Vilppu Drawing Online: The Box

by Glenn Vilppu

This is the third in a series of articles on drawing for animation. In these articles I will be presenting the theory and practice of drawing as a "how to" instructional series. The lessons are based upon the *Vilppu Drawing Manual* and will in general follow the basic plan outlined in the manual. This is the same material that I base my seminars and lectures on at the American Animation Institute, UCLA, and my lectures at Disney, Warner Bros. and other major studios in the animation industry both in the US and in their affiliates overseas. Each lesson will also have short Quicktime clips of me demonstrating the material discussed. If you have not seen the previous lessons starting in the June 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine*, it is recommended that you do. The lessons are progressive and expand on basic ideas. It is suggested that you start from the



Glenn Vilppu. All drawings in this article are by and © Glenn Vilppu.

beginning for a better understanding of my approach.

The box is like the sphere in Lesson 2. It is a critical form that you must learn how to draw if you are serious about developing your drawing skills. The ability to draw the box is a necessary basic skill.

If you don't have a complete mastery of this, it will hinder your development as an artist. Spend as much time as it takes to become proficient at drawing them at any angle or in any combination.

Part One

Start by drawing a series of boxes free-

hand, i.e. not using a straight edge. Think of the box tumbling through space (see Illustration No. 1). Approach it as if you were animating it so that each drawing is a progression from the last. Be care-

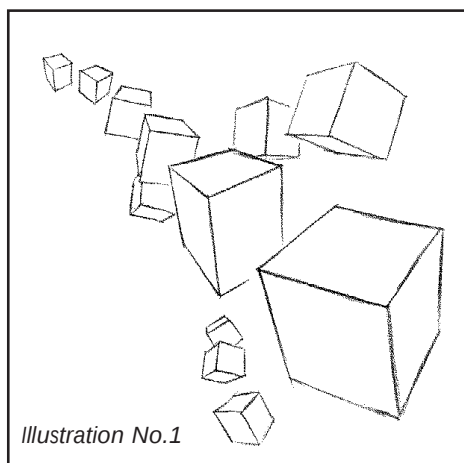


Illustration No.1

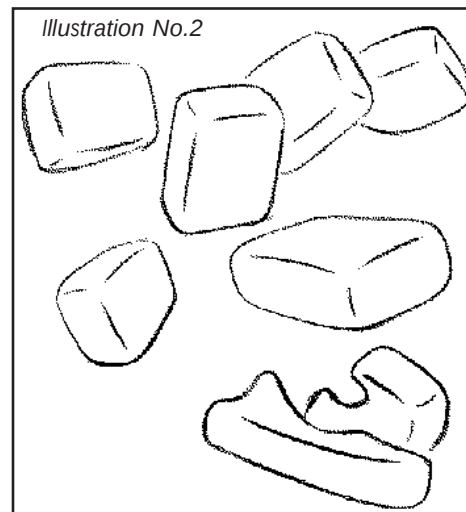


Illustration No.2

ful that you maintain the feeling that the corners are at right angles and that you have a sense of foreshortening as the sides recede back in perspective. If you have no knowledge of foreshortening or perspective, or are having a difficult time with this, you should acquire a good book on perspective and take some time to study it. This is a skill that is absolutely necessary in your development as an artist.

The box is...a critical form that you must learn how to draw...

Part Two

Now let's take this box we have been drawing and round off the sides so that it looks like a bar of soap (see Illustration No. 2). Start by tumbling it through space as we did in Part One. After you feel comfortable, I want you to see if you can give it life

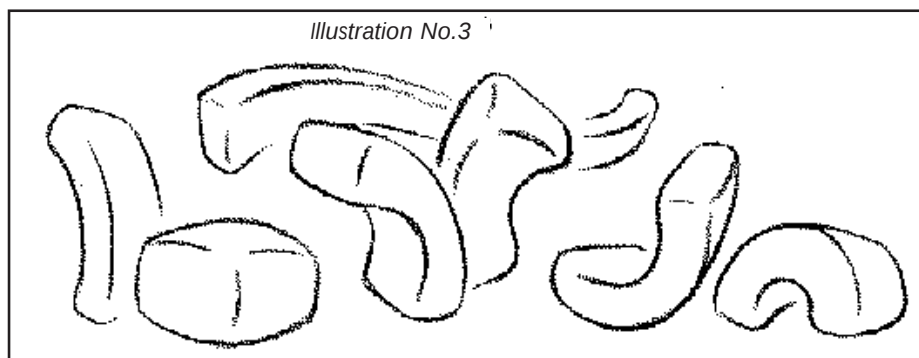
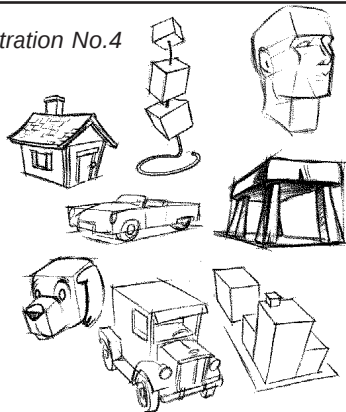


Illustration No.3

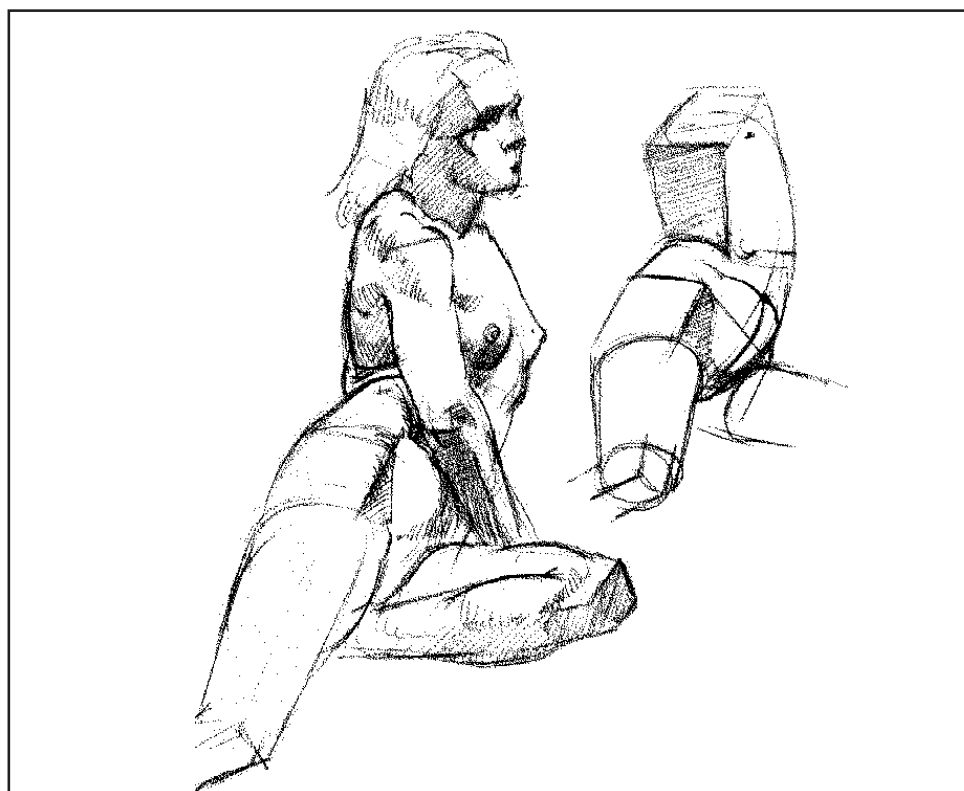
Illustration No.4



and a personality the same way we did in Lesson 1 (see Illustration No. 3). Have it bend, twist, walk and meet other boxes. Think of fat boxes, thin boxes; in short, become master of the box!

Sometimes we use the box as a starting point when drawing difficult angles.

If it helps, set up some boxes. You could suspend some from the ceiling by string or wire. It would even help to make a box mannequin to draw from, using blocks of wood and wire (see Illustration No. 4).



In short, become master of the box!

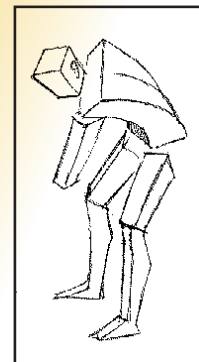
It is easy to relate houses, cars, and other inherently box-like forms to our simple box. Look carefully at the other examples on these pages to see how the box was used to help draw them. Sometimes we use the box as a starting point when drawing difficult angles. Remember, there are no rules, just tools. The sphere and box are tools that help you to understand complex forms and enable you to depict them successfully in three dimensional space.

Note: The on-line version of this article includes a Quicktime movie of master drawing instructor Glenn Vilppu demonstrating drawing techniques that every animator should know!
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7vilppu.html>



Glenn Vilppu teaches figure drawing at the American Animation Institute, the Masters program of the UCLA Animation Dept., Walt Disney Feature Animation and Warner Bros. Feature Animation, and is being sent to teach artists at Disney TV studios in Japan, Canada and the Philippines. Vilppu has also worked in the animation industry for 18 years as a layout, storyboard and presentation artist. His drawing manual and video tapes are being used worldwide as course materials for animation students.

Glenn Vilppu first wrote for Animation World Magazine in the June 1997 issue, "Never Underestimate the Power of Life Drawing." His drawing manuals and video tapes may now be purchased in the Animation World Store.



Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The 7th Hiroshima International Animation Festival

(August 20-24, 1998)

by Gigi Hu

Attending the Hiroshima Animation Festival is probably one of the most sought-after goals of many independent animators around the world. A biennial event since its inception in 1985, it has become Asia's premier animation festival officially supported by ASIFA, an organization which is devoted to the promotion of animation art.

The number of entries has increased from 451 at the first festival to 1,127 at this most recent one.

A Friendly, if Fierce, Competition

The main focus of the festival is the competition. The number of entries has increased from 451 at the first festival to 1,127 at this most recent one. 64 of those entries were then preliminarily selected and screened three consecutive nights before an enthusiastic audience and a panel of international jurors. Because of its competitive streak, festival director Sayoko Kinoshita appealed for understanding and 'no hard feelings' at the press conference. She was concerned that when the results were announced at the end of the five-day festival, 'friends' could become 'hostile,' some negative feelings she has experienced in the past.

A total of 16 awards were

given out this year. Leading the list was Sylvain Chomet's comic-like *The Old Lady and the Pigeons*, which won the Grand Prize of the festival. Alexander Petrov's poetic entry, *The Mermaid*, was a close fight. However, due to its themes of love and revenge, the film was awarded the equally prestigious Hiroshima Prize which honors outstanding animation that contains subject matter related to love, peace and friendship. The Debut Prize was Anna Henckel-Donners-Marck's nostalgic black and white *Busby*.

To honor the late Renzo Kinoshita, a new prize was inaugurated in his name and the winner was Nicolas Jacquet's bouncy *L'Arène* (Série *Vermillon*). Two International Jury prizes were awarded: one to Jan Pinkava's slick computer animation film, *Geri's Game*, and the other to Solweig Von Kleist's delightful *Romance of the Heart*. In all, ten other films were honored under the Special Prize Category. Indeed, these win-

ners are in a special class of their own. They are all remarkable pieces.

Other Events

Throughout the festival, even while the competitive films were reserved for evening screenings, Aster Plaza, the main venue of the festival, was a hive of cheerful activity in the day. Special screenings, workshops, exhibitions and guest appearance discussions brought hordes of spectators to the plaza.

The festival organizers



worked hard to promote a special program by Ray Harryhausen, the award-winning *Dynamation* director whose famous works include *The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms* (1953), *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1977) and *Clash of the Titans* (1981). Because of his grandfather-like figure, and unassuming personality that is always ready for a laugh or two, one young Japanese animator felt comfortable enough to ask him about his general living habits—including the kind of food he ate!

Special screenings, workshops, exhibitions and guest appearance discussions brought hordes of spectators to the plaza.

Other foreign presenters included Normand Roger and Judith Gruber-Stitzer. Both did presentations on the topic of music and animation, sharing their knowledge patiently through translators.

Most surprising of all, was a



The Debut Prize was Anna Henckel-Donners-Marck's nostalgic black and white *Busby*.
© Anna Henckel-Donners-Marck.

presentation by local-born Toshio Iwai. An interactive media artist, he seems like a child prodigy, a 21st century Japanese animator, in sharp contrast to veteran classic animators like Kihachiro Kawamoto and Yoji Kuri, who were in the audience attending his presentation. Toshio Iwai showed us his seemingly endless range of multi-

media works which graduated from hand-operated flipbooks to zoetropes, and included sets of virtual television, video and computer-generated graphics and piano media performances, such as his high-tech collaborative concert with Ryuichi Sakamoto in Tokyo, 1996. Improvisation and experimentation are his forte. His futuristic works not only dazed but held the audience spellbound to near numbness.

Most surprising of all, was a presentation by local-born Toshio Iwai.



"Time Stratum II," a three-dimensional zoetrope sculpture by Toshio Iwai. Photo courtesy of the Hiroshima Festival.

Cultural Exchanges

As it was an Asian animation festival, I was keen to meet up with Asian animators. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of India's independence, a record number of Indian animation films were shown under the sponsorship of the Japan Foundation Asia Center. Four Indian animators flew in to

grace the occasion: eminent pioneer animator Ram Mohan, and three other younger animators, Prakash Moorthy, Suddhasattwa Basu and Jayanti Sen, who added an exotic touch with her sari outfits.

The late Renzo Kinoshita and his wife, Sayoko, are well-known for their detective-like searching out of Asian animators and films. Thus, I was looking forward to 'The Asian Animation Collection.' It included works from Malaysia, The Philippines, Mongolia, Thailand, Iran, Republic of Korea, and the much awaited animation series, *Kampung Boy*, based on comics created by Lat.

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of India's independence, a record number of Indian animation films were shown...

Shanghai Animation Film Studio directors, Jing Qing Hu and Yun Chu Wu, were also present at the festival. Their film, *Snow Fox*, was among the 64 selections. Sounds of eagerness were heard from the floor when the entry's screening was announced. Perhaps, it was because it was the only other Asian competitive entry besides Japan's four national entries. Shanghai Animation Film Studio is famous for its painted water-color animation films. This distinctive tradition was reflected in the foxes' resplendent golden hues, so rich that it had the effect of a child's pop-out book. But



Snow Fox was one of the films in the 'Asian Animation Collection' show. © Shanghai Animation Film Studio.

somehow that magic animated touch, that breathless grasping quality that we encountered in the past, was missing.

"We last participated seven years ago. China has been in a flux of change. Many talented animators left for the lucrative commercial sector," said director Hu. They were glad that they had come and been exposed to the

international animation community.

The amount of cultural exchange at the festival was tremendous and it would not have been possible if not for the generous support of the city of Hiroshima and her people. The exuberant participation of hundreds of volunteers was the envy of any festival organizer. It is remarkable that a city that has suffered so much, now gives so much in return, especially in terms of hospitality toward animators worldwide. One hopes that in years to come, Hiroshima will have her

own home-grown animation schools and animators and that more foreign media will cover this unique festival, lending it the exposure it deserves.

A complete list of Hiroshima 1998 winners is available in this issue's *Animation World News*: <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7newstoc.html>



AWN publisher/president Ron Diamond with festival director Sayoko Kinoshita. © AWN.

Gigi T.Y. Hu is a Ph.D candidate at the University of Hong Kong, Department of Comparative Literature. She is currently a visiting researcher at Sophia University, Institute of Comparative Culture. In 1996, she co-founded the First Singapore Animation Fiesta.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

My Hiroshima

by Prakash S. Moorthy

Editor's Note: With India's recent arrival into the circle of countries with nuclear arms, the Hiroshima International Animation Festival invited a delegation of Indian animators to Hiroshima so that they could witness, as artists, the devastation wrought against the city in the final days of the Second World War. Animation World Magazine is proud to present one man's point-of-view on how this trip influenced him.

Cities are full of ant-like walking, loving, hating, laughing, crying, men, women and children. It is amusing to realize how issues that grip people and send them scurrying like ants, look so remote and insignificantly mild, when seen and imagined from above. It was 8:10 in the morning and our plane was circling above Hiroshima before landing. Beneath us was a city that looked like any other city would look from above. Neat, simple and peaceful in the morning sun. Blue sky and all. Fifty-three years ago on August 6 at 8:15 AM, it looked like any other city from above too. A few seconds later it did not look like any other city — an image too horrible to imagine.

Loving a neighbor can be a



Left to right: Animators Prakash S. Moorthy, Dave Brunskill and Clive Walley in Hiroshima, Japan. August, 1998. Photo by Ron Diamond. © AWN.

task, but all agree that from up in the sky, there is only one overpowering emotion one feels toward humanity: love. I wonder how this city was once completely denied it.

He was more than a kilometer away from the hypocenter when the atomic bomb fell.

I am an independent animation film maker from India and was invited to the Hiroshima '98 International Animation Film Festival. I am from Kerala, India's most southern state. To make a living, I

also design sets for the live-action film industry there. Hiroshima was my first animation film festival abroad, as well as my first trip to Japan. For this, I am very grateful to Sayoko Kinoshita, the Director of Hiroshima '98.

When I landed, I met the nicest people. They were nice in Hiroshima before August 6, 1945 too. I met one of the few who survived. Mr. Sunao Tsuboi was a young boy then. He is now the Secretary General of Hiroshima A-bomb Survivors Organization. He ceaselessly works, when his frail health allows him, to convince people of the terrible sickness of

war. He was more than a kilometer away from the hypocenter when the atomic bomb fell. He was on his way to school. When he came to, his skin was falling off like an old shirt.

I wonder if there is another place on earth where an event of such violence, an event so devoid of respect to fellow human beings, has passed.

Smiling, he told us that he did not want to understand military might, a nation's security concerns, nor patriotism or nationalism. He had no meanings for the words deterrence, stock-piling or bargaining power that the nations of the world speak of today. I believe he is able to see us all from above without ever leaving the ground, knowing how insignificant our pride and prejudice are. He went to India and spent a lot of time with the common people in New Delhi. He said that he was sad to see so many poor people in India. When a spirited individual asked if he had also liked the architectural beauty of the city, he was apologetic and sad as he replied bluntly, "I am no tourist. I did not go to India as a tourist."

At the Hiroshima Airport, I also met England's Dave Brunskill, an artist/animator who works with children. He was invited to show his work at Hiroshima '98. Dave studied to become a furniture designer but found himself doing animation. It was his idea to go to the Peace Park and the A-bomb Dome as soon as we arrived. I was overwhelmed with everything I saw there. I saw people praying, both young and old, and placing

flowers and paper wreaths. Young lovers stood holding hands, as if forever, near a huge grassy mound that a plaque said was a mound of ashes from the hundreds of people who perished where they stood. The image of Jacob Bronowski by the pond at Auschwitz came to my mind: 'We have to cure ourselves of the itch for the absolute knowledge and power. We have to touch people.'

I wonder if there is another place on earth where an event of such violence, an event so devoid of respect to fellow human beings, has passed. Is there another place like this Peace Park, which shows no anger, no grudge, only a reminder to future generations that the will to love is far stronger than that to destroy? In a short time, the Peace Park at Hiroshima has become a place of pilgrimage to me, where, I know I will return many times. Though I met him at the airport and shook his hand, this is where I knew Dave Brunskill. I saw him affected, deeply moved, as he walked about from cenotaph to monument. Maybe, I made a similar impression on him too. Later that day, we talked about the strong feelings and images that we felt at the park and how they would reflect in our work for a long time to come. Soon we agreed that we should work together on a film.

To know that one is not alone is a wonderful situation to be in.

We saw a wrist watch that stopped at 8:15; a twisted lunch box with rice burned to a black mass; a vanishing shadow on a

granite wall; blood-stained school uniforms; pieces of nail and skin from a little boy preserved by his dying mother for his father who did not come back to see because he died fighting in a far away land; a model of "Little Boy" that the Enola Gay carried and dropped; the hastily type-written order to use the special bomb — all this and much more stood like ghosts before us at the Peace Museum, wanting to be part of the new story that Dave and myself are resolved to write, draw, animate, and make into film.

Drawing inspiration from Renzo Kinoshita's *Pica-Don* and as a tribute to Sunao Tsuboi and the many others like him, we hope to screen our film at the next International Animation Festival at Hiroshima in the year 2000. We have no idea where our funding will eventually come from, but we are certain that it will come. Hiroshima '98 has been a wonderful experience for the films viewed and people met. Truly a festival devoted to peace featuring an inspiring clutch of international films. Amazing, for a first timer like me, to discover that there exists many others who are concerned with the same concerns that affect me; to know that one is not alone is a wonderful situation to be in.

Prakash S. Moorthy is an independent animation filmmaker based in Kerala, India.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Tenth Annual Conference of the Society for Animation Studies at Chapman University (August 12–16, 1998)

by Keith Bradbury

The 10th annual Society for Animation Studies conference was a wonderful experience. Although it was my first SAS conference, I felt like I was at home for two reasons. Partly because of the similarity, weather wise and in terms of geography, between Los Angeles, California and Brisbane, Australia, and secondly due to the friendliness projected by the conference organizer Maureen Furniss and her assistant Bryan Barker. Their determination to make the conference a success was palpable, fading only when technology inevitably malfunctioned.

**It became obvious that
thought had been given to
where papers were
scheduled...**

Pre-Conference Programming

While the majority of delegates arrived on August 12 the first official day of the conference, there were quite a few overseas visitors who arrived at various times before that. For them and some locals, the pre-conference program consisted of a welcome party at Maureen Furniss' new home, animation screenings and lectures at the Orange County Museum of Modern Art by Robin Allan on Disney artists, David Williams on U.K. animator Sheila



The campus of Chapman University provided a sunny setting for the 1998 SAS Conference. Photo courtesy of Chapman University.

Graber, J.B. Kaufman's "Disney Meets the Golden State" and a screening of Karl Cohen's program of forbidden animation. That was the nighttime activity.

During the day, visits were arranged to Warner Bros. archives at USC and on the lot, the Academy Library and, of course, Disneyland. However, after arriving in Los Angeles four hours before I left Sydney, Australia, then taking a connecting flight to Orange County's John Wayne Airport, before finally picking up my hire car to tackle the famous L.A. freeways, in addition to driving to the Jack Ruberg Gallery up in Los Angeles to see the Fischinger exhibition and buy a VHS copy of his films on Friday, attending Maureen's party

on Friday night, Karl Cohen's screening Saturday night...I wondered on Sunday if I needed to go to Disneyland! Jet-lag had caught up with me. So, I leisurely headed for Disneyland for the first time ever. Mountains of merchandising, piled high, greeted me in every store. Tempted to buy, I settled for cards with drawings from *Steamboat Willie* and other early Disney films on the front, and one card which was a take on Pop Art. It featured Minnie laying on a bed à la Roy Lichtenstein's *Blonde Waiting* series. Minnie says, in parody of the Lichtenstein, "I wish Mickey were here." Later, I learnt that around the time Disneyland was being planned, Disney was in close correspondence with Sal-

vador Dali. Something of the surreal still lingers if only the sense of carnival.

The Conference Program

The paper that in retrospect has helped me shape how the diverse presentations related to the conference theme of "In the beginning..."

was Barbara Fleischer Zucker's "Anna Curtis Chandler: A Storyteller

Who Could Keep Them from the Movies." Zucker's paper told of Chandler's opposition to cartoons in the 1930s and her active campaign to attract U.S. children to art through her gallery art talks. This paper preceded Gunilla Muhr's, "Aesthetic Strategies of the Disney Studio in the 1930s." Though no direct relationship was posted between Disney's strategies in the 1930s and Chandler's art talks in the same era at the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, Disney's interest in art and artists in the 1930s, which Robin Allan extensively considered in his talks, and 1930s animation, generally became more fascinating because of this juxtaposition of presentations.

It became obvious that thought had been given to where papers were scheduled and that it was anticipated that not all papers would fit neatly into clustered interpretations of the conference theme.

Day One

Day one began with two papers on early animation technology. Alan Bryman's "Theorizing the Early Technologies of Animation" argued against the concept



Busy conference organizers Maureen Furniss, Ph.D and her graduate assistant Bryan Barker. Photo courtesy of Keith Bradbury.

of technological determinism - that technology determines certain outcomes. Bryman's paper pointed out that early animation studios were not exact replicas of each other in terms of formulating the role of the director. From this basis he then moved to a more complex model of animation production in which technology was one of five factors that influenced the final outcome. The others were work ideologies (industry, culture, societal beliefs), strategic (and one would add aesthetic) choice, design principles, and organization of work.

Day one began with two papers on early animation technology.

In stark contrast Richard Leskosky's paper delved into the history of early animation technology, animation on the outer curve of a cylindrical drum, not the inner surface. The interesting point was that such technology pre-dates the history of cinema and is an instance of non-filmic animation. Let's hope that these talks become articles in animation journals.

Other papers, while tracing the history of individual animators

at particular studios, cast a light on questions of authorship. Pierre Floquet's "TEX & Tales: From Tex Avery's Debut to the Beginning of His End (Recurring Theme and Evolving Style)" focused on the evolution and recurring themes of Tex Avery's character 'Red' and how 'Red' became a means for Avery to construct his audience.

(Hopefully, we will be able to read more on the subject in Floquet's forthcoming publication on Tex Avery's comic language.) Tarleton Gillespie's "Toy Story and Consumer Culture" gave an account of the cultural construction of computer animation and argued how Pixar's Academy Award-winning film has become emblematic of how CGI will be explored. Gene Walz's "Charlie Thorson and the Twilight of the Fleischer Studio" came from his forthcoming publication *Cartoon Charlie: The Life and Times of an Animation Pioneer* and detailed the distinctive place Thorson had in anticipating the specialist profession of character designer in animation studios. Susan Ohmer's paper on the re-writing of the history of New York's independent computer animation company Blue Sky Studios since being taken over by Fox had special relevance for any scholar of authorship. Robin Allan's papers on Disney and his connections with and use of European artists and art in the '30s and '40s was a sketch of what to expect in his forthcoming publication on Disney and, as I said before, worked well with the material Gunilla Muhr presented.

Rose Bond and Ruth Hayes discussed how cultural provincialism authors films in "Northwest Animation: The Roots of Creative Variance," while David Ehrlich's "The Beginning of the 'ASIFA Presents' Collaboration Films: Aesthetic and Political Problem Solving," and Chris Padilla's "The Development of American Animation Festivals" detailed examples of how animation can be authored as 'other' to the prevailing socio-economic imperatives of corporate/large studio animation.

A direct correspondence between authorship and animation I found in Tom Klein and J.B. Kaufman's papers in the evening of day one. Tom Klein put Universal cartoons, 1929-30, 'on trial' in an attempt to establish which films could be credited to Tex Avery. The degree to which animation is the product of the studio system/house style or to individual presence is again a question of authorship. The verdict proved inconclusive partly because the audience was being tested at 9.30 p.m. after a long first day and partly because we all wanted more information. J.B. Kaufman, on the other hand, wondered what to make of two versions of Disney's *Whoopie Party* of 1932. His premise was that unlike theatre productions that can vary with each performance, animated films are a finished product, so circulation of variations of the same film indicate something. His conclusion was that the existence of different versions of *Whoopie Party* was due to censorship (i.e. government authorship) of such inoffensive cartoons in the 1930s.

Day Two

Day two began with Mark Langer's paper "The Freak Show Cultural Tradition in American Animation." Having seen Karl Cohen's program of forbidden animation before the conference started, Langer's paper further underlined the divergent interests of animators in the '20s and '30s. He argued that the representation of the anomalous body (characters as mixtures of humans and animals) and the replication of the corny atmosphere of freak shows in early Fleischer animation was a means to transgress notions of the self.

The next three papers were as different from each other as one would want. Vicki Callahan's paper analyzed *Space Jam* as spectacle, concerned to be uncanny, not magical, involving its audience not in projections of utopia

cances of death from Disney to *The Simpsons*. Alan Cholodenko's paper set out to topple cause and effect reasoning by proposing that instead of beginnings we should think of circulations of texts and the tropes of discourse.

Other papers, while tracing the history of individual animators at particular studios, cast a light on questions of authorship.

The afternoon papers clustered around experimental animation. Lynn Tomlinson working from primary sources constructed a reading of what was, she had established, an early Quay Brothers film *Der Loop der Loop*. Rune Kreutz's "Absolute Films and the Consequences of Abstraction" was a defense of abstract animation and traced its lineage from the 1920s to Richard Reeves' *Linear Dreams* of 1997. Then came a series of papers which prompted a questioning of the boundaries of animation, especially Robert Haller's paper on Jim Davis' films in the Anthology Film Archive in New York, and less so William Moritz's history of Jordan Belson's work and Ying Tan's papers on Belson's latest film *Mysterious Journey*. When does experimental film become animation? Does it matter? Such questions didn't seem as problematic for the presenters as they

did for me. Nonetheless, the viewing of Belson's and Davis' work, along with that of the German Puppet films on day three and George Pal's films on day one were highlights for me.



Left to right: Roger Palmer (Australia), Jeanpaul Goergen (Germany), Laura Knight (UK) and outgoing SAS president Richard Leskosky (USA). Photo courtesy of Keith Bradbury.

but in an experience of mutation, and thus, effecting a removal of the audience from their social context. Luca Raffaelli's "Death and Animation" on the other hand offered a wide ranging account of the structural and other signifi-



USC professor Christine Panushka (USA), left, with publisher John Libbey (Australia). Photo courtesy of Keith Bradbury.

Day Three

Papers were more narrative 'histories of' on day three, though not entirely. Johann Goethals detailed the difficulties of establishing the Academy of Ghent as a primary agent in the development of European animation. A much longer session, 1.5 hours rather than the usual 30 minutes, was given to Jeanpaul Goergen's "Puppet Animation Film in Germany from 1915-1945." Jeanpaul estimated that between 1915 and 1945, three to four puppet films were released annually in Germany. However, many of these are now lost but what has been restored is fascinating. My paper on Harry Julius followed, suggesting the relevance of an open mind to animation practice. Wendy Jackson next presented "Czechoslovakian Animation Under Soviet Occupation." Her paper worked to reveal how Czech animation could flourish under the rigid political organization of Communism. Marty McNamara discussed the theme of sexual ambivalence in the work of the Russian animator Kovalyov. No discussion was made, or indeed questions asked, about the reception of his films in Russia. Ton Crone gave the history

of the beginning of the Netherlands Institute for Animation Film. Asli Tunc followed with the paper she wrote with John Lent on "Women and Animation in Turkey." Who said there is not a need for women's liberation? In addition to the difficulty for women animators in Turkey, what struck me during the presentation was the

European modernist style of much of the work. The last two papers, David Williams' talk on UK animator Sheila Graber and Robin Allan's paper on "Make Mine Music: An End and a Beginning," I had heard in some form in the pre-conference sessions and tuned in and out. But I am looking forward to reading Robin Allan's forthcoming book on Disney artists.

What astounded me was the number of publications about to appear in print on animation.

A Boom in Animation Publications

Beyond that, the screening of restored animated cartoons from the various archives made the conference unique. The conference also featured and sold the latest animation publications from Maureen Furniss' *Art in Motion* published by John Libbey and Karl Cohen's *Forbidden Animation* to publications on the experimental films of John Davis, published by the Anthology Film Archive and edited by Robert Haller. What astounded me was the number of publications about to appear in

print on animation. John Libbey is due to release a book on Asian animation, edited by John Lent, Pierre Floquet's book on Tex Avery's comic language is in production, as are books by Gene Walz on Charlie Thorson, J.B. Kaufman and Robin Allan on Disney. Animation seems to be a growth area in terms of publishing. Finally, Chris Padilla is planning a book on the history of animation festivals, that will hopefully be released to coincide with the exhibition of puppets and puppet animation, curated by Chris, that will tour the U.S. and other places to be decided, from next year.

The next SAS conference will be in Brisbane, Australia to coincide with the triennial exhibition of contemporary Asia Pacific art at the Queensland Art Gallery. It will provide not only an opportunity to assess Asia Pacific animation in relation to contemporary Asia Pacific art, but will also be an excellent opportunity to become familiar with Australian and Queensland animation. I intend to screen a program of Asia Pacific animation and would like to have a global student section. As details are finalized they will appear on Animation World Network.

Visit the Society for Animation Studies web site on Animation World Network:
<http://www.awn.com/sas>.

Keith Bradbury lectures in the History and Theory of Art at Griffith University Queensland College of Art in Brisbane, Australia.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Antz:

The First Biggie from DreamWorks

by Jerry Beck

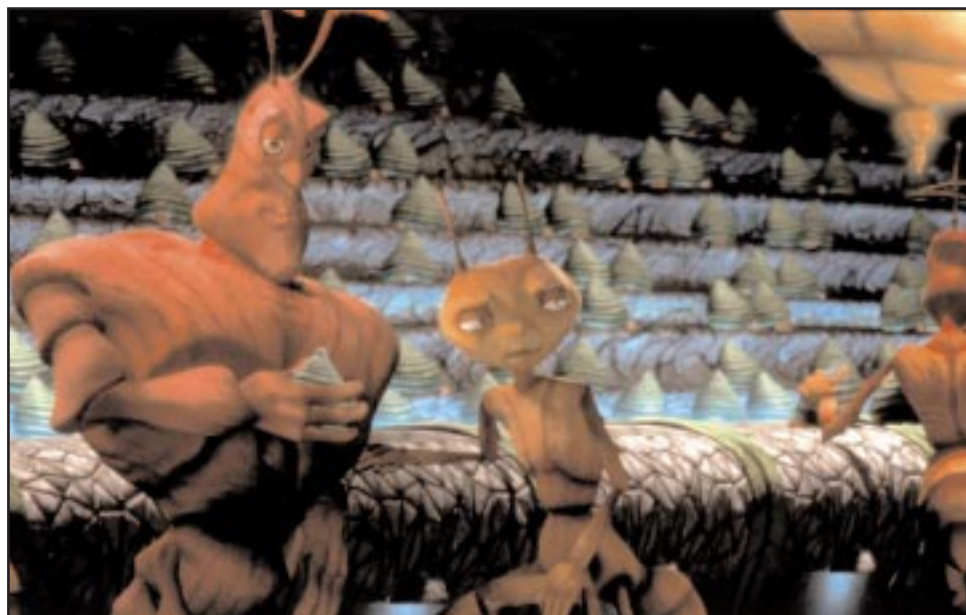
Insects have been a standard subject of animated stories, dating back to Winsor McCay's second film *How A Mosquito Operates* (1912). From Ladislav Starevitch's breath-taking stop-motion silents to numerous Silly Symphonies, Merrie Melodies and Terrytoons of the '30s & '40s, the world of bugs is a familiar one to cartoon filmmakers. This fall we are presented with two computer animated "bug" movies, the second in a series of DreamWorks vs. Disney same-subject feature films (DreamWorks' *Deep Impact* beat Disney's *Armageddon* to the theaters earlier this year).

Antz fulfills all the requirements expected of a contemporary feature length animated film, thus no one will be particularly disappointed.

Antz is the first to arrive, and it delivers the requisite goods to be a crowd-pleasing family film. However, everything I perceived about the film, before seeing it, was generally true about the finished product. On the one hand, the film has a dark look and claustrophobic feel, plus the character design is rather ugly. On the plus side, casting Woody Allen, as the neurotic lead character, was inspired.

The Film's Events

The film begins promisingly



Z, a worker ant, complains to his friend Weaver, a soldier, in the bar.
© DreamWorks LLC.

enough, as "Z" (Woody Allen) explains his inferiority complex to his analyst, while staring out at the vast ant colony going through its daily routine (a stunning opening sequence). We are then introduced to the General (Gene Hackman) who controls the soldiers and worker ants and is scheming a take-over plot tied to the digging of a strategic tunnel. That night at the local bar, Z's spirits are lifted when he hears about an "Insectopia" located somewhere in the outside world. He is further transformed after meeting Princess Bala, who is secretly slumming among the workers.

She picks Z to dance with and he falls in love. The following day Z wanders through his predictable schedule in a love-struck stupor. When he learns that the

Queen will review the troops, he arranges to switch places with his soldier pal, Weaver (Sly Stallone, whose character looks somewhat like *The Tick*). Unfortunately for Z, the troops are immediately sent to battle, a suicide mission planned by the General, against the Termites. The battle sequences are spectacular, but not unlike the insect vs. human war in *Starship Troopers*.

Z is the only survivor. The scene of Z surveying the battlefield, and finding the disembodied head of companion soldier Barbatos (Danny Glover) is effectively touching, sad and funny. Hailed at the colony as a war hero, Z formally meets the Queen and Bala. When it's discovered that Z is actually a worker, not a soldier, a confrontation leads Bala and Z to fall

through a trash chute to the outside world. Escaping the dangers of a magnifying glass and giant water drop, the pair make their way toward "the monolith" (a water fountain), where "Insectopia" is rumored to be just beyond.

Back at the colony, rumors of Z's defiance and independence inspire the workers to revolt, but the General convinces them to keep digging his beloved tunnel. Meanwhile, Z and Bala soon find a picnic spread and believe this to be Insectopia. They meet two snooty upper-crust wasps, Chip and Buffy (Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin), who help them with a "force field" (plastic wrap) surrounding a sandwich. The ants then get trapped on some bubble gum stuck to a boy's sneaker and are tossed into a garbage heap — this the real "Insectopia," a virtual Disneyland of rotting food. When one overfed stink bug complains that something tastes like crap, he's delighted to find out, "It IS crap!"

I do admire DreamWorks adult approach to animated feature filmmaking.

The General's chief lieutenant, Cutter (Christopher Walken) finds Bala at a campfire and kidnaps her, returning her to the colony. Z goes back to rescue her, just as the General begins the tunnel opening ceremonies. Z and Bala discover the General's true plot and warn the Queen. In short, Z saves the day and the ants survive. The camera pulls back to reveal the ants' location to be Central Park, the film ends on a shot of the real New York skyline, paralleling the film's opening shot.



Z's fleeting moment of bliss dancing with Princess Bala in the bar. © DreamWorks LLC.

The Long and the Short of It

Antz fulfills all the requirements expected of a contemporary feature length animated film, thus no one will be particularly disappointed. But no one will be particularly surprised either. It's the same reaction I had to Fox's *Anastasia*, the film doesn't give us any more than it has to. Part of the success of *Toy Story*, and some of the other recent Disney cartoon features, is that with every new film they reach way beyond what we're used to — they push the envelope. *Toy Story* was not only

a groundbreaking computer generated feature, it had characters we could relate to and a strong story. *Antz*, compared to that, is just a novelty. It's fun to watch, but forgettable.

Computer animation has gotten so good...the main characters almost feel as if they were performed by live actors in grotesque insect make-up.

I do admire DreamWorks' adult approach to animated feature filmmaking. The first part of *Antz* plays more like a Woody Allen neurosis comedy than any comparable family film. When Z complains about his insignificance, or abstains from "drinking out of an insect's anus," these bits could have been easily excerpted from Allen's *Manhattan* or *Annie Hall*. The film goes on to echo moments from *Animal Farm*, *Patton*, even Sylvester Stallone's *Rambo* — though the film's climax recalls Stallone's recent box office bomb, *Daylight*.

For all the stunt casting involved, only Allen, Gene Hack-



A wide-eyed Z and Bala discover "Insectopia." © DreamWorks LLC.



General Mandible confronts Princess Bala. © DreamWorks LLC.

man and, surprisingly, Stallone's personas really connect with their characters. Can we really tell, or care, if Sharon Stone is Bala or Anne Bancroft is the Queen? No character here generates much sympathy. Computer animation has gotten so good, so slick, and so realistic that the main characters almost feel as if they were performed by live actors in grotesque

insect make-up. It took a while for me to get used to looking into Zs realistic eyes, his E.T.-like facial features, and his near-perfect dental work.

Much action occurs but little of it engages the audience. The film is bland, overall - no big laughs (think Robin Williams's *Genie* or Eddie Murphy's *Mushu*), no dramatic highs that had me cheering

(think the climax of *Toy Story*), and no original message of inspiration (think *Hoppity Goes To Town*). Don't get me wrong, the film held my full attention for 83 minutes, but it's as hollow as the ants' underground colony.

I felt detached from "Antz" but was intrigued by its artistry. Ironically, I can get the same pleasures from watching an actual ant farm.

Jerry Beck is a cartoon historian, writer and animation studio executive. He was editor of The 50 Greatest Cartoons (Turner), recently co-wrote Warner Bros. Animation Art (Levin) and is currently a freelance writer and consultant through his own company, Cartoon Research Co.

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Bonus HTML Features

Every on-line (HTML) issue of *Animation World Magazine* contains additional features not found in the download or print Acrobat version, such as Quicktime movies, links to Animation World Network sites, extended articles and special sections. Don't miss the following highlights that are showcased exclusively in this month's *Animation World Magazine* HTML version:

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7toc.html>

- **Dig This!**
Rebecca Moses Brings Animation Into Fashion
Includes a Quicktime movie of Rebecca Moses' animated fashion show, *The Discovery of India*.
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7digthis.html>
- **Vilppu Drawing Online: The Box**
Includes a Quicktime movie of master drawing instructor Glenn Vilppu demonstrating drawing techniques that every animator should know!
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7vilppu.html>
- **Frieden: The Tree of Peace**
Includes a Quicktime movie of the film, *Frieden: The Tree of Peace* by Alina Chau, Hiu Fan.
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7frieden.html>
- **William Kentridge: Quite the Opposite of Cartoons**
Includes a Quicktime movie from *6 Soho Eckstein* by William Kentridge.
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7moinskentridge.html>

Max & His Special Problem - A Review

by Jerry Beck

Great talent and great animation are a cause for celebration, no matter what length, what format, or what venue it is found in. On those rare occasions when great new talent is confirmed, as when *The Ren & Stimpy Show* debuted and established Nicktoons or *The Little Mermaid* premiered and set Disney Features on its present course, there is a thrill in the discovery of a fresh vision and a new artist — and for me, a delightful reminder of why I love animated cartoons in the first place.

For those of us who covet great animation as others might cherish fine wine, Dave Wasson's funny new film...will bring a smile to your brain...

For those of us who covet great animation as others might cherish fine wine, Dave Wasson's funny new film *Max & His Special*



Medical assistants poke and prod at Max and his dislocated brain. © Nickelodeon.



© Nickelodeon.

Problem will bring a smile to your brain (your lips will be too busy laughing). Your brain will especially relate, as Max's gray matter is the cause of the titular special problem.

Max, a white collar pencil pusher, sneezes away some eraser dust and accidentally blows his brain out of his head. His boss gives him permission to "take care of it," thus the brainless Max begins a citywide adventure, first misplacing his mental organ atop a taxicab and later at a hospital, where the surgeons spend more time adding up his bill than repairing the damage.

The Studio Mechanism

This short was exec

produced by Fred Siebert and Larry Huber for Frederator's *Oh Yeah! Cartoons!* series on Nickelodeon. Like Siebert's previous "World Premiere Cartoons" (a.k.a. *What A Cartoon!*) for Cartoon Network, this is a group of creator-driven cartoons in search "the next big thing" in kid's animation.

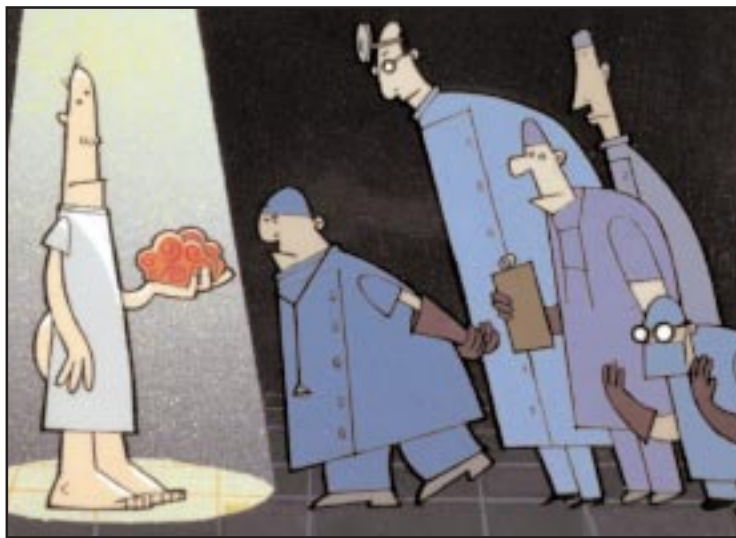
It's important to understand that these films are funded by U.S. kids cable networks and not the NFB or the U.K.'s Channel 4.

Whereas the previous Hanna-Barbera series was consumed with finding a *Ren & Stimpy* derivative, this series is focused on kid's point-of-view, as (with a few exceptions) most of the entries star a little boy, a little girl, a cat, a dog, or a robot — or a combination of those elements.

Though Siebert's Hanna-Barbera experiment yielded a few excellent shorts (Genndy Tartakovsky's *Dexter's Laboratory* and John R. Dilworth's Oscar-nominated *The Chicken From Outer Space* first come to mind), and his Nickelodeon project is showing even greater sophistication, it's important to understand that these films are funded by U.S. kids cable networks and not the NFB (National Film Board of Canada) or the U.K.'s Channel 4. That any of these works transcend their intended audience is remarkable and an unexpected benefit.

Brilliant Elements

Wasson's film breaks out of the pack, noticeably by lacking any of the aforementioned kids, pets and robots. The mood is laid back, the music (by Rob Cairns) is cool jazz, and the story line is wonderfully simple. But it's clearly the direction, animation and timing (Bob Jacques) that turn this silly idea into a beautifully comic film. As crazy as the plot sounds, as wild as the art style is, Wasson



A team of doctors try to figure out how to get Max's brain back into his head. © Nickelodeon.

never shoves it in your face. There's a casual pace afoot that allows the audience in on the

I hope to see more cartoons from Wasson, and encourage further risks from producers...that allow new independent talent to emerge.

jokes.

Wasson's direction achieves a matter-of-fact coolness that others in the *Oh Yeah!* program work way-too-hard aspiring to. This short is practically pantomime, full of funny drawings and little touches that work. When Max loses his mind, due to his leaving it on a taxicab, the camera pans a map with appropriate broken-line indications of where his errant cerebrum has traveled. Small insets are superimposed over the map indicating Max's worry, and

the plight of his brain — trapped in a fish bowl, being used as a punching bag, a bowling ball, and winding up in a bohemian coffee house in appropriate beret & goatee. Small gags, well done, each one topping the one before it. Later, when Max finds his brain in a vegetable stand, it's marked for sale at 39 cents. It remains marked 39 cents throughout the rest of the cartoon. Funny stuff!

Kudos to color stylist Lou Romano, co-creator/co-writer Chris Miller, and Wasson's other collaborators for creating a little gem that comes closer to classic UPA and vintage Zagreb than any recent retro-styled animation I've seen. I hope to see more cartoons from Wasson, and encourage further risks from producers like *Oh Yeah! Cartoons!* that allow new independent talent to emerge. In the meantime, my brain and I will celebrate *Max & His Special Problem*.

Jerry Beck is a cartoon historian, writer and animation studio executive. He was editor of The 50 Greatest Cartoons (Turner), recently co-wrote Warner Bros. Animation Art (Levin) and is currently a freelance writer and consultant through his own company, Cartoon Research Co.

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The doctors complete an elaborate mathematical formula...to determine Max's medical bill! © Nickelodeon.

Frieden: The Tree of Peace

by Alina Chau, Hiu Fan

Editor's Note: Ron Diamond, publisher of Animation World Magazine, discovered Alina Chau, Hiu Fan and her film Frieden: The Tree of Peace at a recent screening of student works at UCLA. Moved by the plight of children in war torn countries, Alina made this remarkable film as a gift to the United Nations.

"Children in many nations continue to be victims of adults' wars - losing their parents and their homes, losing their childhood and their opportunity for education, losing their limbs and their lives to the machinery of violence. The Convention seeks to protect children from these worst manifestations of adult failure."
-The Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF

Developing My Idea

The original meaning of the word "Frieden" means "peace" in German. In the film, I adapted the word "Frieden" to be the name of the young heroine. Frieden is a little girl, who lives in an unstable country; a place where war takes away her childhood, her happiness and the people she loves. The only time she can escape her cruel reality is in her dreams. She dreams to have a



Frieden: The Tree of Peace. © 1998 Alina Chau, Hiu Fan.

paradise: a peaceful world, where she can play and share her happiness with other children; a world where children of different races respect each other's differences.

In order to make the dream and war sequences merge together, I gave the tree a...symbolic meaning...

I always wanted to make a short animation for the United Nations (UN) because I deeply admire their contribution to world security. However, when I first started developing the story of Frieden, I did not intend on making this particular film for them. My first initial idea was to make a story based on my childhood hap-

piness and fantasies. Therefore, I started the story with the fantasy sequences: flying unicorns and reindeer, funny fragments of fireworks and even a huge tree in which children play. I like to climb trees a lot. Even when I was a small child, I liked to climb trees, so, the tree has quite an important role in the story. After I finished developing the fantasy part, I needed an ending. At first, I did not want to have a tragic ending after the beautiful dream sequence, but I couldn't think of any happy endings for this story. A happy ending would have made the story look like "Alice in Wonderland." Therefore, I decided on a sad ending, a war scene came into my mind. Since this ending

creates a very strong statement, I resolved to end the entire film with a war scene. In order to make the dream and war sequences merge together, I gave the tree a more important role and added a symbolic meaning to the image.

Several people have asked me whether I have experienced war myself.

A Child's Right

Several people have asked me whether I have experienced war myself. I was a lucky child. I never experienced a disaster in my life. My childhood was a very sweet, peaceful and happy one, but I know that there are many children in the world who are not as fortunate. Many children live in unstable countries, like Frieden, and become victims of war. I believe that all children should have the right to enjoy a happy childhood, go to school, make friends and play. All children have their dreams and wishes. I strong-



The film starts with beautiful fantasy sequences. © 1998 Alina Chau, Hiu Fan.

ly believe that as animators we can use our "magic" to give them the courage to fight for their dreams. But, how can a child fight for his/her dream, if he/she needs to fight just to survive every day?

When I finished the storyboard for *Frieden*, I knew that this film was the one to be made especially for the United Nations. Every time when I held the pencil, I told myself, "You must make this a good film. This film is not for yourself, but it is a gift to all the chil-

dren in the world."

I hope *Frieden* can carry an educational message not only to our future leaders, the children, but also to adults and politicians, the most significant group of people to influence the world's security.

When I finished the storyboard for *Frieden*, I knew that this film was the one to be made especially for the United Nations.

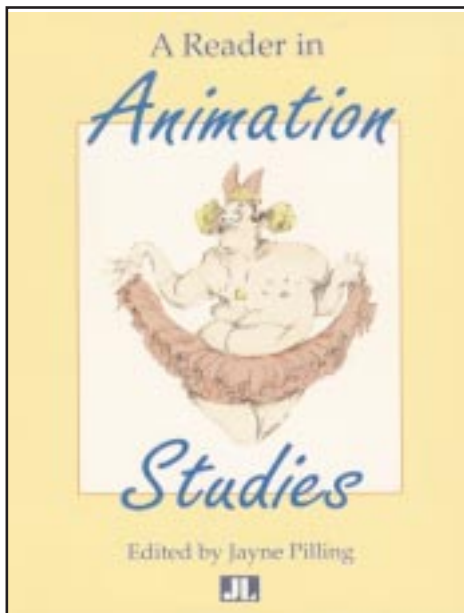
The on-line version of this article includes a Quicktime movie of the film, *Frieden: The Tree of Peace* by Alina Chau, Hiu Fan.
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.7/3.7pages/3.7frieden.html>

Alina Chau, Hiu Fan is an international student from Hong Kong. She is in the Master of Fine Art (MFA) program majoring in Animation at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.



Frieden is unable to sleep due to the war going on outside her window.
 © 1998 Alina Chau, Hiu Fan.



A Reader in Animation Studies, Edited by Jayne Pilling

by Pat Raine Webb

Perseverance Pays Off

What were the criteria for choosing these particular papers out of the 250 or so written and presented over the last ten years? In this respect Jayne Pilling is a worthy choice as editor. She is a fountain of animation knowledge and has made what is probably the best possible selection of material on a wide range of topics with different critical approaches: theoretical, historical, cultural and political. Analyses of individual films give a new insight into many of our accepted values about classic cartoons and reveal some unknown and forgotten or neglected works. A number of the papers were impossible to put into book form being purely visual presentations and some needed extensive editing which was done with Pilling working closely with the authors of the original works.

Perseverance will pay off and you will find many strange and unknown delights in these pages.

Some of the titles are daunting. For example, "Animatophilia, Cultural Production and Corporate Interests" by Mark Langer. To my surprise, this is a serious study of *Ren and Stimpy*. On the other hand, the juxtaposition of the films of Walt Disney and Francis Bacon's *Triptych* in the Tate Gallery in Simon Pummell's essay is rather more obscure. However, look at a print of Bacon's work (even if you cannot get to the Tate to see the original) and Pummell's text becomes less demanding.

Perseverance will pay off and you will find many strange and unknown delights in these pages. An "Intimate Excursion" into the disturbing and macabre world of *The Brothers Quay*, by Steve Weiner, is full of dark desires. The essay discusses the oddly-titled *This Unnameable Little Broom* (1985), the Brothers' version of *Epic of Gilgamesh*. There is a malign presence about this work, the characters - grotesque and erotic puppets - are subjected to bizarre and perverse treatment by savage machines. Yet it enthralls in the same way that horrific episodes in fairy tales often do.

Delving Deeper

Political issues are explored in "The Thief of Buena Vista" by Leslie Felperin, who exposes Western attitudes towards Oriental and Middle Eastern cultures and Arabian Nights fantasy as depicted in *Aladdin*, released in 1992, a year after the Gulf War! In fact, the world of Disney is covered in several essays, the one most likely to appeal is Robin Allan's intelligent and revealing study of European art influences on the films of Walt Disney. To quote the author, "the films themselves were indebted to an older cultural heritage which Disney absorbed and recreated for a new mass audience." Many Disney films are based on European folk and fairy tales and Allan's research is penetrating. (He did his Ph.D dissertation on the work of Disney and European artists.) The similarity between early 19th century book illustrations and the work of Disney artists' inspirational drawings is made abundantly clear. The section dealing with the

My first thoughts on setting about a review of this book were, "Who is going to buy it?" and, "Who is this review aimed at?" The cover picture may attract the average cartoon buff - it bears an intriguing drawing by Joanna Quinn from *Body Beautiful* showing Vince in a Tutu! (Vince is the sexist muscle man who taunts the film's heroine.) Yet what will the average reader make of the content? This is by no means a coffee-table book filled with lavish color. Rather it is a serious study of the medium of animation. The 21 essays collected here are erudite and scholarly and some may not have instant appeal. The visual material, while thought-provoking and relevant to the text, is all monochrome. But look closer and you may be pleasantly surprised.

The Society for Animation Studies was founded a decade ago by Harvey Deneroff in Hollywood, realizing the need for more in-depth critical research on animation. The essays that make up this book began life as visual demonstrations or papers presented at the annual conferences of the Society and now made available to a wider audience for the very first time.

Beethoven Pastoral sequence from *Fantasia* is particularly engrossing. This enlightening and lengthy study gives one a whole new slant on the art of Disney and makes one long to see the films all over again.

The number of women working in animation today inevitably leads to Gender Studies with women's role in society being dealt with extensively.

New light is also thrown on some long-neglected films such as *The Idea* (Berthold Bartosch, 1932), the subject of an in-depth essay by William Moritz that depicts the struggle for freedom of thought. This film was, for me, a personal discovery at the SAS conference in 1993. Several contributions from Moritz appear in the book including his research into early abstract films and animation in Nazi Germany during World War II that makes interesting reading.

Paul Wells' study of the work of Jan Svankmajer highlights this Czech artist's obsession with 'body consciousness.' His research into the intense and claustrophobic world of Svankmajer, a world of cruelty, violence and dark humor, is revealing. As so many of these essays do, it produces a desire to view again the works discussed with greater awareness.

Further Discovery

The number of women working in animation today inevitably leads to Gender Studies with women's role in society being dealt with extensively. An examination of the work of three women animators in the UK, Joanna Quinn, Candy Guard and Alison de Vere, appears in Sandra Low's essay. It covers Joanna Quinn's approach to feminine

issues through her films *Girls Night Out* (1987) and *Body Beautiful* (1990) featuring her anti-heroine Beryl, who is far from the stereotyped cartoon female. Her life with her staid husband, her encounter with a male stripper and her yearning for fun all endear her to us. She is "one of us," jolly, fat, feisty and full of life. Both films are played for laughs although there is an underlying treatment of women both in the home and in the workplace. Although the protagonists of Candy Guard's films are similar to those of Joanna Quinn, her style is less elaborate. It is unadorned and the characters more stylized. Narrative is an essential part of her films and the dialogue is short, sharp and pertinent. Most women can identify with her characters who have problems with dieting, getting their hair done, boyfriends and holidays abroad. The work of Alison de Vere, while dealing with many of the same problems, is far more spiritual and there is a lengthy study of her dream-like and very personal film *The Black Dog* (1987). Familiar as I am with the work of these three artists I found this a most absorbing study.

A more oblique approach is made in Sharon Couzin's analysis of two rather more avant-garde films by women that have a similar theme but are visually disparate. Susan Pitt's *Asparagus* (1978) is lush, gaudily colored and thought-provoking. It is an overtly erotic allegory about personal identity, while Joanna Priestley's *All My Relations* (1990), in which characters are depicted as abstract objects, is far more subtle. It satirizes the hazards of romance, marriage and childbearing and the disintegration of relationships.

Modern technologies are not neglected in two stirring essays on computer animation dealing not only with techniques,

creating "reality effects" and "illusionistic representation," which one would expect, but also with style, and the relationship between computer imagery and aesthetics as depicted in a case study of *Red's Dream* (John Laseter, 1987).

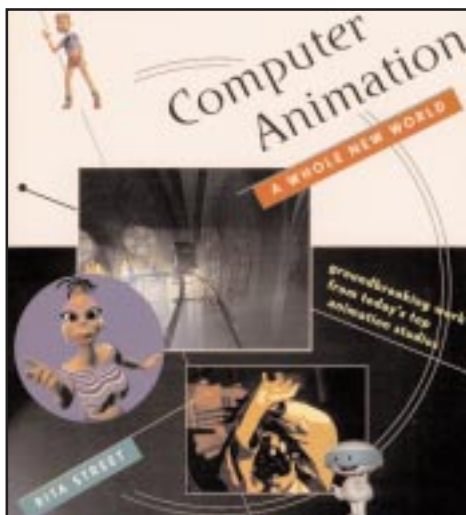
Today it is difficult to define animation. New technology is changing not only how animation is made but also how it is perceived. If you set out with an open mind, this book is a voyage of discovery.

As so many of these essays do, it produces a desire to view again the works discussed with greater awareness.

A Reader in Animation Studies, edited by Jayne Pilling, Sydney, Australia: John Libbey & Company Ltd. (U.S. Distributor: Indiana University Press), 1997. 283 pages. ISBN: 1-8642-000-5 (U.S. \$24.95 paperback). Contributors: Robin Allan, Sharon Couzin, Andy Darley, Harvey Deneroff, Philip Kelly Denslow, Leslie Felperin, Michael Frierson, J.B. Kaufman, Mark Langer, Sandra Law, Terrance R. Lindvall, Lev Manovich, J. Matthew Melton, Michael O'Pray, Simon Pummell, Luca Raffaelli, William Moritz, Steve Weiner, Paul Wells.

Pat Raine Webb is a freelance researcher, writer and programmer in animated film with 20 years experience in the animation industry. She is vice president of ASIFA UK and publishes the group's quarterly magazine Dope Sheet.

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Computer Animation: A Whole New World

by Frank Foster

Ed Catmull Explains Pixar

No one epitomizes CG more than Ed Catmull, who relates in the book's introduction a condensed history of the field. Mr. Catmull has the uncanny ability to be at the right place at the right time. He just happened to be born in Utah where computer graphics were practically invented. He was at the University of Utah during the pioneering days of 3D textured objects and studied under the legendary Ivan Sutherland, where he happened to invent the Z-buffer. He then left for NYIT just as it became the hot bed of 2D paint systems, where he helped develop the alpha channel and early compositing techniques. Catmull then departed NYIT to work for George Lucas and established the computer graphics department that later morphed into Industrial Light and Magic (ILM), a digital production group. Finally, he spun off Pixar as a separate animation company.

Certainly the lessons learned from the spectacular series of Pixar animation shorts is a virtual time line to the success the industry now enjoys. With each short, the Pixar animation group tackled a new set of problems. The book's first chapter, devoted to Feature Film applications, communicates this in a colorful, yet understandable, way. Rounding out the Feature Film chapters are entries from ILM's work on *Spawn*, New Wave International's success in the ride film arena and an interesting

description of how a student film, called *Plug*, was produced at the USC School of Cinema-Television.

Chapter Highlights

The Television chapters are represented by Mainframe's *ReBoot*, the Saturday morning cartoon show that has helped pave the way for other CG productions. A television commercial produced by (Colossal) Pictures for Coca-Cola is also included, and followed by an insightful presentation of Medialab's production pipeline for the use of real-time performance animation to create a television show based on the video game *Donkey Kong*.

The author's previous experience as a magazine editor and writer, is apparent in the approach taken in the book.

Rita Street's new publication on computer animation, *Computer Animation: A Whole New World*, makes no attempt to be a "how to" book, instead it's a richly illustrated portrayal of the process and passion that a select group of animators have brought to the field. She avoids the dry technical read of a reference book and lets the reader instead experience the art form through the eyes of the talent that works so hard to create it. It's through their stories that we inadvertently pick up on the various forms of digital technology that just happen to make the process possible.

No one epitomizes CG more than Ed Catmull, who relates in the book's introduction a condensed history of the field.

The author's previous experience as a magazine editor and writer, is apparent in the approach taken in the book. You won't find the intense detail of a Cinefex article or SIGGRAPH paper here. However, the snapshots of each kind of computer animation does provide an insight as to what aspects of the process are specific to the genre.

The final section of the book is devoted to films that were personal projects used to test and prove the production worthiness of new technologies. At the 3D software company Softimage, the director of visual research, Charlotte Davies created an immersive virtual environment. Called *Osmose*, the production is a real-time 3D experience via a stereoscopic head-mounted display with 3D localized sound and a motion tracking vest. The audience of one is called an "immersant" and the encounter is apparently comparable to scuba diving where the

movement is controlled by the chest expansion of breathing and the position and motion of the spine.

If you are thinking about getting into CG, this might be the encouragement you need to get the bug.

The world of motion-capture is explored with a project at Lamb & Company. *Babaloo the Beast Boy* makes use of all three main types of motion-capture: facial, body and hand. The facial system uses reflective markers glued to the actor's face to track expressions and lip-sync dialogue. Hand gestures are recorded through a glove, and body motion with a suit.

In the short film *Sleepy Guy*, Raman Hui of Pacific Data Images (PDI) brings some of his traditional animation sensibility to a fully CG cartoon. The author effectively uses Hui's production story, to point out some of the important parallels that are true for all forms of character based ani-

mation.

The book appropriately concludes with the landmark short *the end* by Chris Landreth. Created as a test of Alias|Wavefront software, the filmmaker incorporates many recent advances into a thoroughly engaging film. Techniques such as motion capture, procedurally generated and animated hair, digital explosions, smoke and lens flares are all thrown in, but some how they seem to fit the offbeat theme of the project.

This might be the perfect holiday gift!

In the End...

While perhaps not the big slick coffee table volume on CG that many have been waiting for, Rita Street's *Computer Animation: A Whole New World*, will excite those with a passing interest in the subject and perhaps inspire a new generation of animators to embrace digital tools. If you are thinking about getting into CG,

this might be the encouragement you need to get the bug. Or if you are an animator that's tired of trying to explain to your relatives what you do for a living...this might be the perfect holiday gift!

Computer Animation: A Whole New World by Rita Street. Gloucester, Massachusetts, Rockport Publishers, 1998. 144 pages. ISBN: 1564963772 (U.S. \$29.99 hardcover).

Frank Foster is a founding vice president at Sony Pictures Imageworks. His computer film contributions include sequences in such feature films as: *Speed*, *Johnny Mnemonic*, *The Craft* and *Contact*. He is currently directing the *High Definition* documentary film *The Story of Computer Graphics*, a feature-length production from the SIGGRAPH organization.

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SIIARA: An Archive for the Animated Medium

by John Southall

Animation is a medium that has had a long history in Britain. The earliest known stop-motion animation to be made in Britain was in 1898. Since then animated films of one sort or another have been produced by a great variety of companies and individuals. However it is not until recently that animation has also developed as an acceptable option within the Higher Education sector. There has been an appreciable increase in the number of courses where animation techniques can be acquired or where the medium can be studied.

Southampton Institute is the largest college of higher education in the United Kingdom.

It is these two facts that lie behind the development of the Southampton Institute International Animation Research Archive (SIIARA). Southampton Institute is the largest college of higher education in the United Kingdom. Based in Hampshire, in the south of England, it has over 15,000 students distributed amongst a variety of Faculties. SIIARA is just one of the research initiatives cultivated within the Design Faculty of the Institute. The archive holds thousands of examples of animation art and film within its collections.

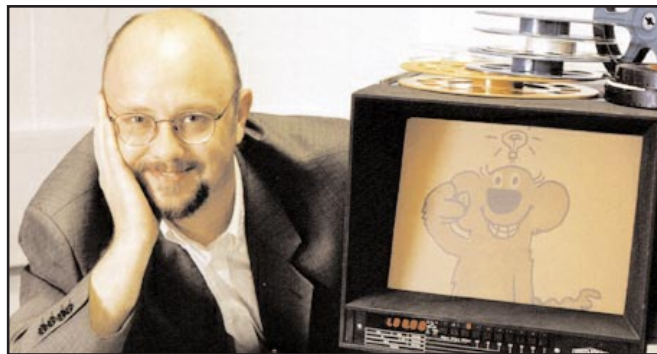
SIIARA has a dual role to play. It seeks to participate in the academic study of animation and

in the ongoing battle to conserve and preserve a vanishing animation heritage. For most production companies today, as so often in the past, simply do not have the time or space to store and catalogue the different elements used in the production of their work. In other words the final destination of a great deal of work is the rubbish dump. Whilst many recognize the waste involved in throwing away such work often there is little alternative for companies focusing on current production.

The development of SIIARA offers an alternative to the situation. Since it appeared two years ago, a variety of artwork and film has been donated to the archive by a number of major British production companies. Current SIIARA collections include a variety of animation techniques, as well as productions from today and the past. Films ranging from the '40s to the '90s are represented.

Key Collections Within SIIARA

To date about half a dozen donations have been made to SIIARA and these now make up its different collections. Some of them are quite small, comprising just 20 or 30 prints, or one or two boxes of newspaper clippings, letters and drawings. Even so they will all in time help give some insight into



John Southall and friend, Roobarb the dog. Photo © SIIARA.

animation production.

Two major donations have helped lay the foundation of SIIARA. One donation is from Bob Godfrey Films. This includes over a thousand film prints and 150 boxes of cels and other production elements. This collection represents the studio's major cinema and television work since the 1960s, such as *The Plain Man's Guide to Advertising* (1962), *Polygamous Polonius* (1960), and *Dream Doll* (1979). More recent work such as *Know Your Europeans: The United Kingdom* (1993) are included, as well Godfrey's popular television series *Roo-*



Original cels from Bob Godfrey's *Dream Doll*. Image courtesy of SIIARA.

barb (1974) and *Henry's Cat* (1983).

Some of the collections are quite small, comprising...one or two boxes of newspaper clippings, even so they will all in time help give some insight into animation production.

But by far the most significant donation to SIIARA—significant in terms of its size, range and importance to animation studies—is the collection acquired from the heirs of John Halas and Joy Batchelor. Halas and Batchelor was the leading animation studio in Britain for over 40 years. Their feature film *Animal Farm* (1954) was just one of many projects produced over



Halas and Batchelor's *Animal Farm*. Image courtesy of SIIARA.

the years. Other projects include *Snip and Snap* (1960), *Butterfly Ball* (1974), *Autobahn* (1979), *First Steps* (1981) and segments of *Heavy Metal* (1981). The company was always at the forefront of the creative use of animation. At its peak the studio was the largest in Western Europe.

This collection not only represents the output of a seminal animation studio. It is also the most varied in our archive. There is material relating to information on planned and uncompleted films, as well as finished productions. In essence it includes: 3,000 cans of

film, production correspondence, scripts, technical articles, photographs, treatments, storyboards, scrapbooks, magazines, books, cels and other artwork.

There is a wide range of material from British animators in the archive as well as a few smaller collections representing international work. For example, there is a collection drawings, sketches and correspondence from Lotte Reiniger, as well as examples of artwork by Bruno Bozzetto, Osamu Tezuka, Marcel Jankovics, Renzo Kinoshita and Paul Driessen. Even so we are always happy to hear of possible donations from Britain and abroad. The collection will keep growing reflecting new acquisitions, as well as the production of new work. However, one may question whether it is enough merely to accumulate collections of material. A common problem of many archives is how to provide effective access to their holdings; to make use of it in a way that brings it before an audience in an informative and thought-provoking manner.

The main strategy adopted so far for SIIARA has been through the use of exhibitions, articles and conferences. This allows selected original material to be made accessible under archival conditions to a large number of people. The archive is currently negotiating with other institutions its role in collaborative exhibitions. For example reproduction and original artwork is being loaned to Britain's National



An original cel from Halas & Batchelor's *Butterfly Ball*. Image courtesy of SIIARA.

Museum of Photography, Film and Television. This will be included in its permanent animation exhibition which is due to open soon. Despite such collaborations SIIARA is also investing heavily in its own exhibitions and special events, such as a recent conference on the animated medium.

Bob Godfrey Films donated over a thousand film prints and 150 boxes of cels and other production elements.

Drawing on the Past

Earlier this year Southampton Institute hosted the first SIIARA conference on animation. This event was called "Drawing on the Past" and one of its aims was to bring together people from different disciplines and with different interests to discuss animation. The three day event included lectures by animation scholars and a daily program of film presentations. (Details of the event can still be found in the archive section of our web site.)

Whilst organizing the con-



Snip from Halas & Batchelor's *Snip and Snap*. Image courtesy of SIIARA.



Original cels from Halas & Batchelor's *Autobahn*. Image courtesy of SIIARA.

ference I was also able to use some of the material within the archive to curate a simultaneous exhibition. This was devoted to one film in particular—Halas and Batchelor's feature of 1954, *Animal Farm*. The exhibition ran for most of March and April 1998, and was well-received attracting quite a large audience. In addition a number of private and public cinema screenings were organized. Once again this proved to be popular and tickets quickly sold out. More exhibitions are planned for the future as they are an ideal way of presenting our material to the general public.

Restoration of an Animated Classic

The continued involvement of SIIARA in highlighting the achievement of *Animal Farm* has, I think, been a necessary one. This is because of the film's importance as the first British animated feature. Recently this involvement has gone even further than exhibiting artwork and reminding the public of the film. No new inter-negative of the film had been created since its first release in the 1950s and it was beginning to show its age. A great deal of the feature's

impact was lost due to poor color reproduction and contrast. This gave the film an unintended dark and dreary look. Over the last 18 months SIIARA has been instrumental in amending this state of affairs. Co-funding from ourselves, Halas and Batchelor, and the film's current UK distributors, Blue Dolphin Films, have allowed a full restoration to take place. Later this year the restored inter-negative will be used to produce fresh prints for a re-release of the film. For various historical and technical reasons this will be the best print ever seen.

But by far the most significant donation to SIIARA...is the collection acquired from the heirs of John Halas & Joy Batchelor.

The Future of SIIARA

In its short existence SIIARA has made progress in saving a small part of animation history. As it develops it will strive to complement the important work being done by other archives in Britain and abroad. Our future plans are varied and include more exhibitions, publication of the proceed-

ings of 'Drawing on the Past,' on-line access to our main catalogue, and the production of CD-Roms. In addition we are always interested in hearing from individuals or companies with a wish to collaborate on projects. This may range from someone registering for a post-graduate degree to a company sponsoring the activity of SIIARA. At the very least SIIARA wishes to develop as a contact point for those with an interest in animation; a meeting place for the development of ideas and the dissemination of information about the animated medium.

Making Contact

Initial contact should be made in writing either by post or e-mail to: John Southall

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John Southall is Research Fellow in Animation at Southampton Institute and is responsible for the running and development of SIIARA. He has researched and published on contemporary animation production in Britain. Currently he is researching animated film in the Second World War.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.



An original pastel drawing from Halas & Batchelor's *First Steps*. Image courtesy of SIIARA.

by Wendy Jackson

Business

Nelvana Acquires Kids Can.

Toronto, Canada-based animation company Nelvana Limited has completed the acquisition of 100% of the shares of Kids Can Press Ltd., a Canadian publisher of children's books. One of Kids Can's properties is *Franklin*, the story of a turtle which Nelvana has already turned into an animated series. The \$6.1 million (CAN) acquisition now gives Nelvana access to Kids Can's library of over 250 children's book titles. One of these, titled *Elliot Moose*, is currently being developed for an animated television series. The deal is "a highly attractive strategic and financial acquisition for Nelvana," said company co-CEO Michael Hirsh, "and is an important step for us in building a more integrated family entertainment company." Nelvana will operate Kids Can as a wholly-owned subsidiary and will retain all existing employees of the company, including Valerie Hussey who will remain president and CEO of Kids Can, and has signed a multi-year employment contract with Nelvana. Nelvana is traded on the Toronto and Montreal exchanges under the symbol "NTV."

Autodesk Making Discreet Purchase.

In June, Avid Technologies bought Softimage [AF 6/17/98], combining two powers of digital production and 3D graphics. Not to be outdone, in a similar yet



Nelvana has purchased the publishing company responsible for *Franklin*. © Nelvana.

reversed situation, San Rafael, California-based Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) has announced plans to acquire Montreal, Canada-based Discreet Logic (Nasdaq: DSLGF). Autodesk is the parent company of Kinetix, makers of 3D graphics and animation software such as 3D StudioMAX and Character Studio. The merger had some foreshadowing, as Kinetix and Discreet Logic announced a product integration partnership in March [AF 4/7/98]. Discreet Logic, makers of editing and broadcast production software such as inferno* and flame*, will be integrated with Autodesk's Kinetix business unit and become Discreet, a division of Autodesk. The combined entity will be headquartered in Montreal with its 350 employees managed by Richard Szalwinski, Discreet's co-founder and current president. The deal, worth approx-

imately \$520 million, is subject to several conditions, including regulatory approvals and approval of the shareholders of both companies. Closure is expected by the end of 1998. Until this transaction is finalized, both companies shall operate as separate entities.

Cardiff Closing Down.

The Vital! International Animation Festival (formerly known as Cardiff) is closing its doors due to financial losses incurred at its latest edition in June 1998. This year's festival director Jane Williams has left the organization, and the board of directors is now responsible for managing a debt which sources said amounts to approximately (U.K.) £25,000. A press release issued to sponsors and creditors said the decision to shut down is "due to several market factors including the decision of the Annecy festival to go annual and the timing of the Second World Summit of Children's Television held earlier this year in the U.K. In addition, the U.S. animation studios are no longer in a recruiting period and therefore, also did not support the festival at the level of previous years, all of which contributed to a lower level of industry support than forecast." Joan Lofts, chair of the festival board of directors, said, "To have to close the festival organization at a time when British animation is vibrant and growing is particularly painful but without confirmed financial support at this

point there is no alternative." However, insiders expect that the festival will be reincarnated in the future, or combined with existing events in other locations such as London or Bradford. After all, the festival began in London more than 30 years ago, and has only been held in Cardiff since 1992.

Read Heather Kenyon's review, "Cardiff: A Difficult Year to Be Any Festival," in the August 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/3.5/3.5pages/3.5cardiff.html>



Bill Dennis has been named CEO of UTVI Animation and RM/USL Studios. Photo courtesy of Bill Dennis.

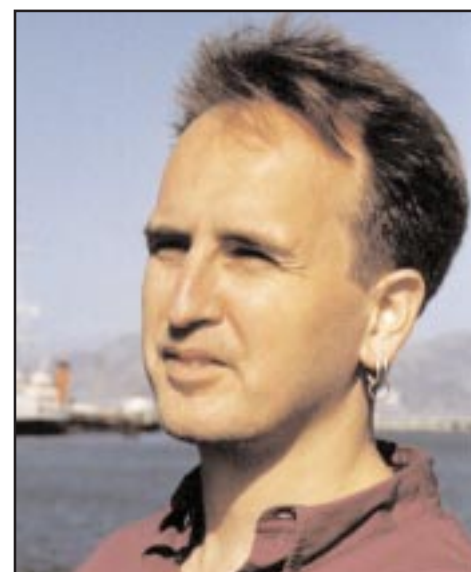
People

Musical Chairs. Bill Dennis has been named Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Mumbai, India-based **UTVI Animation and RM/USL Studios**, the largest animation studio in India. Dennis will be responsible for overseeing and growing the operations of the companies' studios in Singapore and Bombay and for developing new animation studios around the region. He will also oversee all in-house development and co-production deals. Dennis, now based in Los Ange-

les, was previously president of Fil-
Cartoons in Manila, a studio which serviced Hanna-Barbera and Turner Broadcasting before they merged with Time/Warner. Prior to that, he was on the executive production teams for Disney's *Lion King*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*. Animation World Magazine's August 1998 issue features a profile of RM/USL Studios:

(<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/3.5/3.5pages/3.5lent.htm>). . . . San Rafael, California-based **Industrial Light & Magic (ILM)** has expanded its executive ranks with several internal promotions. **Gail Currey** has been upped to the newly-created position of vice president and chief operating officer, from her previous position as director of digital production operations. **Jeff Mann** has been promoted to executive in charge of creative operations, up from his previous post as director of production operations. **Alan Keith** has been named vice president/chief administrative officer, up from a position as director of business operations and finance at Lucas Digital London-based distributor **Link Entertainment** has promoted **Genieve Dexter** from sales manager to head of sales and acquisitions. She joined Link in 1997, leaving a post as sales manager at Eva Entertainment. Link also promoted **Annika Bluhm** from script development executive to head of script development. She joined Link in 1996 and previously worked in development and as a script editor at BBC. . . . U.K.-headquartered **Cambridge Animation Systems**, creators of Animo 2D animation software, named **Tom Carrigan** director of international sales. He will be based in Glendale, Califor-

nia. Carrigan has previously held sales positions with Softimage and Toon Boom Technologies. . . . **Mediapegs**, creators of PEGS 2D animation software, has named **France Létang** director of sales & marketing for Europe. She will be based in Paris and report to vice president Paul Marcot in Los Angeles. Létang previously worked at Saban International Services. . . .



Dutch director, Jerry van de Beek. Photo courtesy of Curious Pictures.

Curious Pictures has signed Dutch director **Jerry Van de Beek** to its roster. Van de Beek has worked with (Colossal) Pictures (San Francisco), Condor Video (Amsterdam) and The Moving Picture Company (London). He specializes in combining CG and cel animation. In 1996, he co-founded, with Betsy de Fries, the animation and design firm, Little Fluffy Clouds, which will continue operating in San Francisco. . . . New York-based animation/live-action studio **Pitch, Inc.** signed London-based director/ animator **David Freedman** to its new commercial division. His background includes directing, writing, agency work and stand-up comedy. Plus, with his writing partner, Alan Gilbey, he is currently writing an animated

series, *The Foxbusters*. Pitch's commercial division is represented by **Kelly Flint**, who joined the new company from Curious Pictures, where she worked with Pitch co-founders **Russ Dube**, **Chris Gilligan** and **Steve Katz**. . . . **Greg Pair** has completed an eight-month stint as animation supervisor on MTV's stop-motion show *Celebrity Death Match*. He is returning to the studio he is a partner in, **AMPnyc**, to direct and produce stop-motion commercial work. . . . **Blue Sky | VIFX's** Harrison, New York studio has promoted **John Donkin** to managing technical director. He joined the company as senior technical director earlier this year after serving as a director of animation/studio manager for Lamb & Company (Minneapolis, MN). . . . Palo Alto, California-based **Pacific Data Images (PDI)** has hired **Paul Cook** as corporate controller, a role in which he will report to CFO John Batter and be responsible for implementing internal financial controls. Cook was previously corporate accounting manager at Adobe Systems. . . . **Cartoon Network** has promoted **Dea Connick Perez** to vice president of programming and production, a role in which she will direct all aspects of programming, including scheduling, acquisitions and program operations. She joined the Atlanta-based company in 1997 as program director, and was previously director of acquisitions at Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite/TV Land. . . . **Nelvana Limited** has promoted **Emmanuèle Pétry** to director of co-productions. She was previously director of the company's Paris office, where she will remain. Pétry has been responsible for securing co-production partners for Nelvana,

including *Neurones*, *Marathon* and *Ellipse*. Also at Nelvana's Paris office, **Marie-Laure Marchand** has been promoted to director of international sales. . . . **Jon Vein** has been promoted from senior to executive vice president at **Film Roman**, a role in which he will continue to oversee the company's reach into feature films, including *There Goes the Neighborhood*, a live-action/animation film in development with Universal. . . . **Mike Darnell** has been promoted to executive vice president of specials and alternative programming for **Fox Broadcasting**, where he will oversee new projects including the animated series *Family Guy*, *The PJs* and *Futurama*. Darnell joined the network in 1994 as



Sam Register. Photo by M. Hill. © 1998 Cartoon Network.

director of specials. . . . **Sam Register** has been promoted to vice president of **Cartoon Network Online**. He was previously creative director for the division, and has overseen the development and recent launch of the network's web site, www.cartoon-network.com. Prior to joining Cartoon Network in Atlanta, Register worked in San Francisco at (Colossal) Pictures as creative director and at Turner New Media, where, as creative director, he created the

Cartoon Network World section of America Online. . . . **Jim Keeshen** has joined **Film Roman** as a director on the animated series, *Family Guy*. This spring, his company Jim Keeshen Productions produced the show's pilot with creator Seth MacFarlane. . . . **Craig Allen** has been named general manager of **Jim Henson Interactive**. He was formerly a senior producer at **Disney Interactive**. . . . **Jeff Williams** has joined **Animation World Network** as webmaster, replacing Ged Bauer, who has left to pursue further education. . . . **UCLA's School Of Theater, Film And Television** has appointed **Robert Rosen** dean, replacing Gil Cates, who stepped down from the post last year but remains a member of the faculty. Rosen was promoted internally from the position of dean of the Film and Television School, a division of the Theater, Film and Television School (including the Animation Workshop). He has worked at UCLA since 1975. . . . Filmmaker **James Cameron** and effects master **Stan Winston** have resigned from the board of directors of the Venice, California-based effects studio they co-founded five years ago, **Digital Domain**. They will retain their financial stakes in the company. A Digital Domain spokesperson said the resignations were an administrative move to avoid conflicts of interest for the two former board members who have exclusive deals with studios. . . . Digital Domain's vice president-creative director **Price Pethel** recently left to take on the same position at **Dream Quest Images**, Disney's effects division. . . . Santa Monica, California-based **POP Television** has hired visual effects supervisor **Alex Frisch**, visual effects artist

Chris Staves, visual effects producer **Nesya Horsburgh** and director of technology **Andreas Wacker**, all formerly of neighboring studio 525 Post, with the intent to launch a new, internal visual effects boutique. . .

In Passing...

Lee Gunther.

Animation editor and producer Lee Gunther passed away on August 25 following a stroke suffered the previous day. He was 63 years old. A memorial service was held on Saturday, August 29 at Forest Lawn in Burbank, California. Starting at Warner Bros. in the 1960s and then at DePatie-Freleng studios from 1964-1978,



Lee Gunther. Photo courtesy of Ann Gunther.

Gunther was a film editor on more than 85 animated shorts in all. At DePatie-Freleng, he also worked as an executive in charge of production in the 1970s. After DePatie-Freleng ceased production, Gunther was one of the founding producers of Marvel Animation, where he served as executive vice president and executive producer on television series such as *G.I. Joe* (1984, Toei/Sunbow/Marvel) and *The Transformers* (1984, Hasbro/Toei/Sunbow/Marvel), as well as the feature-length animation *Inhumanoids: The Movie* (1986, Hasbro/Starwild and Wildstar

Music/Marvel). He also served as vice president of foreign production at Fox Kids Network. In 1990, he co-founded Gunther-Wahl Productions with Michael Wahl. With Wahl, he served as executive producer of the animated series *Angry Beavers*, a Gunther-Wahl production for Nickelodeon. In his lifetime, Gunther earned four Emmy awards, two Humanitas Prizes, two Golden Reel awards and 12 Clio awards. Long-time friend and colleague George Conte, who first met Gunther at DePatie-Freleng said,

"Lee's dedication to quality filmmaking, both technically and creatively placed him at the top of his profession. Because of his strong character and gentle ways, he was respected and loved by all who knew him. He will be missed." Lee Gunther is survived by his wife, two brothers, two sons and two granddaughters.

The family requests that donations in Lee Gunther's memory be sent to:

UC Regents Stroke Research Program
Department of Neurology
Attn: Dr. Robert Colins, Chairman
Reed Neurological Institute C-139
404 Hilgard Ave. Los Angeles, CA

90095-1769 U.S.A.

Gail Banker. Animation educator Gail Banker died of a stroke on Sunday, September 13, the day after her 60th birthday. For the past 13 years, she taught animation to children and adults in the New England area: as an instructor at Hanover High School in Hanover, New Hampshire; as a counselor at the Charles River Creative Arts Program in Dover, Massachusetts; and as founder of Single-Frame Studio in Norwich, Vermont, where she ran weekly animation workshops for children. She also taught adult animation classes at her studio and through various continuing education programs. A recent project was "Kids Speaking to Kids," for which her students created public service announcements that aired on public access TV stations. In addition to helping hundreds of young people make their own films and learn the art of animation, Gail was an animator. While studying at Harvard University's renowned Carpenter Center animation program, she completed the film *Sketches for the Elephant Child* (1981) and later, in the mid-1980s, she made an animated rotoscoped film called *Handcraft*. She also studied with Yvonne Andersen, founder of the Yellow Ball Workshop. She is survived by her husband, four children, and five grandchildren.

Gail Banker's animation workshops were profiled in the March 1997 issue of *Animation World Magazine*: "Kids Making Animation: A Sampling of Children's Animation Workshops Around the World": (<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.12/articles/jacksonworkshop1.12.html>).

Places

H-B Characters in Kidzville.

Paramount's Great America theme park in Santa Clara, California is starting construction on a new 2.3-acre area called Kidzville, scheduled to open to the public in March 1999. The featured attractions and rides will be based on Hanna-Barbera characters such as Scooby Doo, Shaggy, Yogi Bear and Top Cat. However, this is not a new licensing deal. Hanna-Barbera costumed characters have been featured at the park since it was opened by Marriott in 1976 and bought by Paramount in 1992.



Kidzville at Paramount's Great America theme park. © 1998 Paramount.

Disney World Adding Animated Attractions.

Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, is launching the largest expansion in its history. New attractions that will be added in the next 12 months include "Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin," an interactive film ride; "The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh," a ride for youngsters which will replace "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride;" and a return of "The Main Street Electrical Parade," featuring floats of Dumbo, Peter Pan, Alice in Wonderland, and other animated characters.

Films

Stop-Motion Short Headed for Big, Big Screen.

Animator Mark Osborne is wrapping up production on a new short film. Titled *More*, the film is believed to be the first stop-motion animated large-format film. It is being shot on 65mm film that will be printed on 70mm for projection in large-format cinemas such as the IMAX chains. The film, a co-production of Swell Productions and Bad

Clams Productions, is being funded by a private investor, was shown in trailer form at last week's International Space Theater Consortium conference in Australia. Osborne, a 1992 Cal Arts graduate, is shooting the film at the school's facilities in Valencia, California, with donated equipment made possible by support from the Large Format Cinema Association (LFCA). Animators rarely work in this specialized and costly film format, but the use of animation in large-format films is increasing, said producer Debra Callabresi of Swell Productions, who, earlier this year, produced a large-format

version of the *Absolut Panushka* animation series, as well as shorts by Jules Engel and Bärbel Neubauer and a soon-to-be-completed new film by Christine Panushka. "Large format films present a perfect opportunity for experimentation in animation," enthused Callabresi. "The sheer size of the screen offers the potential to create worlds and environments impossible in any other visual medium." For instance, Russian paint-on-glass animator Alexander Petrov is expected to complete his 70mm *Old Man and the Sea* by the end of this year [AF 6/03/98]. The LFCAs third annual conference and film festival will take place in Los Angeles, May 18-22, 1999.



Animator David Candelaria, left, and director/animator Mark Osborne working on the stop-motion film *More*. Image courtesy of Bad Clams Productions.

Nick Movies Picks *Bone*. Nickelodeon Movies has acquired the feature film rights to Jeff Smith's comic book, *Bone* for an unspecified amount of money in the "high six-figure" range. The property is being developed as an animated feature film to be directed by Smith. Albie Hecht, president of film and television entertainment

at Nickelodeon said, "*Bone* is a comic fantasy adventure in the tradition of *Star Wars* and *Lord of the Rings*." The story is about three lost cousins who become stranded in an uncharted land filled with rat creatures and beetle-like dragons. Nickelodeon expects this film to appeal to a wider and older audience than its upcoming animated feature *The Rugrats Movie*, because it extends to the property's existing fan base. To date, 90,000 English-language copies of *Bone* have been sold since it was first published in 1991. Nickelodeon Movies also recently acquired the feature film, ancillary and television rights to the works and life of cartoonist Rube Goldberg, but at this point no plans for animated projects based on the property have been announced.

Television

HBO Birthing Family Channel.

HBO will launch its new 24-hour channel, HBO Family, in February 1999. The venture is being headed up by Sheila Nevins, senior vice president of original programming for HBO, and Dolores Morris, who left Children's Television Workshop (CTW) in June to become vice president of HBO Family. Nevins said, "With this new venture, HBO enters the family programming business on a full-time basis for the first time." The network's programming line-up will include several new programs, of which four are animated series aimed at preschoolers: *A Little Curious* is a mixed-media show that is being produced by New York-based Curious Pictures.

It will feature CGI and puppet characters based on everyday objects, such as Bob the Ball, Mr. String, Doris the Door and the Shoe Family. *George and Martha* is a 2D-animated show based on James Marshall's children's books about two hippopotamuses. It will be produced by Nelvana with Maurice Sendak, author of *Where the Wild Things Are*, as executive producer. Cinar Films will also deliver a 2D-animated series, *The Adventures of Paddington Bear*, based on Michael Bond's classic books, and from Hit Entertainment will be *Anthony Ant*, a 2D-animated story of an ant and his adventures in Antville. In addition, several animated series which have already aired on HBO



Curious Pictures' series, *A Little Curious* will air on the new HBO Family Channel. © HBO.



The debut of Nelvana's *Mythic Warriors: Guardians of the Legend* has been postponed by production delays. © Nelvana.

will be moved to HBO Family: Nelvana's *Pippi Longstocking*, *Babar*, and Cinar's *The Little Lulu Show* and *The Country Mouse and City Mouse Adventures*. HBO Family will also serve as a testing ground for pilots before they air on the main HBO channel: *The Sissy Duckling*, an animated musical written and produced by Harvey Fierstein, will air in June 1999 and *Goodnight Moon*, a mixed-media special about bedtime stories that will include animated shorts, will debut in late 1999. Acquisitions include *Animated Epics* from SAC and *Animated Odyssey*, a mini-series from Poseidon Pictures. HBO is developing other new projects, and is actively seeking partnerships with outside producers. New programs will be announced as they are confirmed.

CBS Delays Cartoon Debut.

CBS has made a last-minute programming decision to move the debut of its new, animated Sat-

THE ANIMATION FLASH

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“The Flash is the best newsletter in the cartoon business. It treats the news of animation with the respect it deserves. I look forward to getting it every week.”

Fred Seibert
Executive Producer/Creator of "Oh Yeah! Cartoons!"
Nickelodeon

“It has really proved itself as a one-stop resource for international animation news, information and commentary.”

Jerry Beck
Animation Historian

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urday-morning line-up back to October 3, two weeks later than the previously announced date of September 19. The aim is to maximize on-air promotional opportunities, which would have been difficult during the sports programming scheduled on many of the network's local affiliates in the next few weeks. "We are very proud of our new Nelvana-produced shows," said Lucy Johnson, senior vice president of daytime/children's programming and special projects at CBS. "However," she added, "when it became clear that preemptions in early September would limit our promotion opportunities for our new line-up, we decided to wait two weeks and allow all of our stations to get a solid start on the same Saturday morning." The new line-up marks CBS' return to Saturday morning animated programming after poor ratings in the 1996/97 season caused the network to go with live-action programming in 1997/98. All six of the new animated shows—*Franklin*, *Anatole*, *Dumb Bunnies*, *Flying Rhino Junior High*, *Birdz* and *Mythic Warriors: Guardians of the Legend*—are being produced by Canadian studio Nelvana, a deal that was announced in January. In addition to the entire line-up delay, CBS will delay the debut of one of the series, *Mythic Warriors: Guardians of the Legend*, because of production delays attributed to "complicated animation techniques" being used for the show. It will be replaced with reruns of another Nelvana series, *Tales From the Cryptkeeper* until November 7.

NBC'S Not Stressed: New Toon In Works. U.S. network NBC aired only three episodes of the prime-

time animated series *Stressed Eric* before pulling it off the air due to disappointing ratings (Nielsen average 4.8). The show, produced with British broadcaster BBC by Klasky Csupo and Absolutely Productions, had been specially dubbed with a new voice track for American viewers, and was slated to air for six episodes through the end of the summer season. A spokesperson for NBC said that the network may air *Stressed Eric* again in the future, and is "actively looking to develop animation projects." While NBC's reaction to cancel *Stressed Eric* may seem premature, the network is not giving up on the prime-time game. In fact, NBC has ordered a fully-animated pilot of a new series created by comedian David Spade (*Just Shoot Me*) and writer Drake Sather. Tentatively titled *Peewee*, the show is being developed with Brillstein-Grey Entertainment and animated by Sony Pictures Imageworks, for possible launch in January 2000. The pilot should be ready by January 1999. If the show goes forward, it will be the

network's first original prime-time animated series, created for the network, since *Mr. Magoo* (UPA, 1964/65).

August Nielsen Ratings. By special arrangement with Nielsen Media Research, AWN publishes the Nielsen ratings for animated programs on a monthly basis in the *Animation Flash*. The ratings included herein are only for U.S. national network television. The following list of animated national network programs is ranked by Household Ratings. A Rating is the percent of households that tuned into the program. This percentage can provide us with the number of households that tuned into the program on average during the month. The universe estimate for the 1997-98 television season is 98 million TV homes. Each rating point represents one percent of that universe, or 980,000 TV homes. Translation: *The Simpsons* August 2 broadcast, with a 6.4 rating, was viewed in just over 6 million (6.4 x 980,000) households. The below ranking is an



Stressed Eric. Photo courtesy of Klasky Csupo.

average for the month of August 1998 (monthly cycle includes the last five days in July).

August Nielsen Ratings

Rating/Program (Network, Day, First Telecast, Time)

6.4	<i>The Simpsons</i> 2 (Fox, Sunday, 8/02, 8:30 p.m.)
5.9	<i>The Simpsons</i> (Fox, Sunday, 8/02, 8:00 p.m.)
5.1	<i>King of the Hill</i> 2 (Fox, Tuesday, 7/28, 8:30 p.m.)
5.0	<i>The Simpsons repeated special</i> (Fox, Thursday, 8/20, 8:30 p.m.)
4.8	<i>Stressed Eric</i> (NBC, Wednesday, 8/12, 9:30 p.m.)
4.5	<i>King of the Hill</i> 1 (Fox, Tuesday, 7/28, 8:00 p.m.)
4.3	<i>The Simpsons repeated special</i> (Fox, Thursday, 8/20, 8:00 p.m.)
2.1	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> 4 (ABC, Saturday, 8/01, 10:00 a.m.)
2.0	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> 3 (ABC, Saturday, 8/01, 9:30 a.m.)
1.9	<i>New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh</i> (ABC, Saturday, 8/08, 12:00 p.m.)
1.8	<i>Bugs Bunny/Tweety Show</i> 1 (ABC, Saturday, 8/08, 10:30 a.m.)
1.8	<i>Bugs Bunny/Tweety Show</i> 2 (ABC, Saturday, 8/08, 11:00 a.m.)
1.7	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> 2 (ABC, Saturday, 8/01, 9:00 a.m.)
1.7	<i>Spider-Man</i> (Fox, Monday-Friday, 7/27, 4:00 p.m.)
1.6	<i>Batman/Superman</i> 2 (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 9:30 a.m.)
1.6	<i>Disney's Jungle Cubs</i> (ABC, Saturday, 8/01, 11:30 a.m.)
1.6	<i>Science Court</i> (ABC, Saturday, 8/08, 12:30 p.m.)
1.6	<i>Toonsylvania</i> (Fox, Saturday, 8/01, 9:30 a.m.)
1.5	<i>Spider-Man</i> (Fox, Saturday, 8/01, 9:00 a.m.)
1.4	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> 1 (ABC, Saturday, 8/01, 8:30 a.m.)
1.4	<i>Men in Black</i> (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 10:00 a.m.)
1.3	<i>Batman/Superman</i> 1 (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 9:00 a.m.)
1.3	<i>Pinky and the Brain</i> (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 10:30 a.m.)
1.3	<i>Sylvester/Tweety Mysteries</i> 2 (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 11:30 a.m.)
1.3	<i>Sylvester/Tweety Mysteries</i> (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 11:00 a.m.)
1.2	<i>Batman/Superman</i> (WB, Monday-Friday, 7/27, 4:30 p.m.)
1.0	<i>Bobby's World</i> (Fox, Friday, 7/31, 7:00 a.m.)
1.0	<i>Incredible Hulk</i> (UPN, Sunday, 8/02, 9:30 a.m.)
1.0	<i>Life With Louie</i> (Fox, Monday-Friday, 7/27, 7:30 a.m.)
1.0	<i>Sam & Max</i> (Fox, Saturday, 8/01, 11:30 a.m.)
1.0	<i>Superman</i> (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 8:30 a.m.)
0.9	<i>Animaniacs</i> (WB, Monday-Friday, 7/27, 3:30 p.m.)
0.9	<i>Jumanji</i> (UPN, Sunday, 8/02, 9:00 a.m.)
0.9	<i>Ned's Newt</i> (Fox, Saturday, 8/01, 8:00 a.m.)
0.9	<i>Pinky and the Brain</i> (WB, Monday-Friday, 7/27, 4:00 p.m.)
0.8	<i>Batman</i> (WB, Saturday, 8/08, 8:30 a.m.)
0.8	<i>Disney's 101 Dalmatians</i> (ABC, Saturday, 8/01, 8:00 a.m.)
0.6	<i>Captain Planet</i> (WB, Monday-Friday, 7/27, 8:30 a.m.)
0.5	<i>Pinky and the Brain</i> (WB, Saturday, 8/01, 8:00 a.m.)
0.4	<i>Tiny Toons Adventures</i> (WB, Monday-Friday, 7/27, 8:00 a.m.)
0.4	<i>Umptee 3 TV</i> (WB, Friday, 7/31, 8:00 a.m.)

AWN is interested in publishing additional ratings from cable television and ratings systems outside the U.S. To contribute information, please contact us at editor@awn.com.

TV Tidbits. As of September 20, *The Simpsons* became the longest-running sitcom currently on television. Creator and executive producer Matt Groening said he is surprised the show has gone on this long, but, he added, "The real surprise is that this coming season is as good as any we've ever done. The writers, led by executive producer Mike Scully, are fantastic. They get the characters and they are creating original stories that don't repeat what we've done or anything else I've seen on television." The tenth season premiere of *The Simpsons* aired on Fox, on Sunday, September 20 at 8:00 p.m. (ET/PT). The episode, titled "The Wizard Of Evergreen," depicted Homer, who, experiencing a mid-life crisis, is inspired by Thomas Edison to become an inventor. Due to minor post-production delays, **Cartoon Network** has moved the premiere of its newest animated half-hour series, *Ed, Edd 'n' Eddy*. The show, produced by Danny Antonucci's A.K.A. Cartoons, will now debut on Monday January, 4, 1999, pushed back from its original November launch date. . . . **Nickelodeon** aired the *Kablam! Life With Loopy Birthday Gala-bration* on Friday, September 25 at 8:00 p.m. (ET/PT). Created by Steven Holman and his San Francisco-based production company Wholesome Products, the special is a spin-off from the animated variety show *Kablam!* mixed-media skit, *Life With Loopy*.

Commercials

Rugrats Driving Car Campaign. Automaker Lincoln Mercury, a major sponsor for Paramount and Nickelodeon's animated feature, *The Rugrats Movie*, will spend



Chel White's Countdown commercial produced by Curious Pictures. Image courtesy of Curious Pictures.

approximately U.S. \$20 million on tie-in advertising to launch a new minivan called the Mercury Villager in conjunction with the film's release in November. The campaign will include TV ads featuring the Rugrats characters in an animated version of the minivan. Lisa DiMarzio, vice president of promotions for Paramount Pictures' Motion Picture Group said, "With Paramount, Nickelodeon and Lincoln Mercury's strategic blending of marketing resources, this partnership will bring new dimensions to tie-ins for animated entertainment properties."

Seeing Spots. Curious Pictures' San Francisco studio produced 30 seconds of computer graphics and collage animation as part of a 60-second changeable promo spot called *Countdown* for HBO. It was directed by Chel White (*Photocopy Cha Cha*) using a combination of photographs animated on cels and Flame software. . . . San Francisco-based **Wild Brain Inc.** produced *Super Mom II*, a sequel to their original Clio-award-winning spot, *Super Mom*, for Coca-Cola. The 30-second, cel-animated commercial was directed by Mike

Smith and Dave Marshall. . . . Santa Maria, California-based **Computer Café** recreated the opening sequence of *Armageddon* for an Aerosmith video titled "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing." Digital artists Brett Paton and Mike Bozulich used Lightwave 3D and

After Effects software to recreate the asteroid and planets featured in the sequence. . New York-based **J.J. Sedelmaier Productions** created a second animated commercial for Quilted Northern Tissue, working again with illustrator/designer Bonnie Timmons (*Caroline in the City* opening credits). The new, 30-second spot, titled *Grandma Mimi* was directed by J.J. Sedelmaier, and the head animator was David Wachtenheim. . . . Toronto, Canada-based **Topix/Mad Dog** created 22 animated effects sequences for the first annual Golden Marble Awards show. Director of animation William Cameron used 3D Studio MAX for 3D, and Adobe Illustrator,



J.J. Sedelmaier Productions' new Quilted Northern Tissue commercial. Image courtesy of J.J. Sedelmaier Productions.

Photoshop and After Effects for 2D sequences, with final compositing done on Flint and Flame.



Kiki's Delivery Service. © Walt Disney Enterprises. All Rights Reserved.

Video

Kiki's Delivery Date. On September 1, Buena Vista Home Entertainment released the English-language dubbed video of Hayao Miyazaki's animated feature, *Kiki's Delivery Service*. The family film tells the story of a 13-year-old witch named Kiki. The English voice track features Kirsten Dunst, Phil Hartman, Matthew Lawrence, Debbie Reynolds and Janeane Garofalo. The film is 104 minutes, rated "G" and priced at U.S. \$19.99. The Walt Disney Company will distribute several more of Miyazaki's films, including *Princess Mononoke* (theatrical release by Miramax, summer 1999) and *Castle in the Sky* (video release 1999). Buena Vista Home Entertainment president Michael O. Johnson said, "We see our job now as a caretaker for this wonderful animation on a worldwide basis, but we don't want to alter it. You don't want to take the Mona Lisa and make her smile. It is our responsibility to deliver these products as they were meant to be delivered."



A.D.V. Films and their label Urban Vision is releasing *Tekkamen Blade II - Stage 3: Final Encounter*. Image courtesy of A.D.V. Films.

Abundant Anime Releases. Fall is upon us, and so is the season of many video releases. Following is a list of recent and upcoming U.S. video releases of Japanese anime films. A.D.V. Films and their label Urban Vision are releasing *Tekkamen Blade II - Stage 3: Final Encounter* (9/22/98), *Dark Warrior* (10/06/98), *MAPS 1 & 2* (10/06/98), *Dark Warrior - First Strike* (10/06/98), *Cutey Honey Volume 2* (10/13/98), *Delinquent in Drag* (10/20/98), *Ruin Explorers 2* (10/27/98) and *Slayers: Dragon Slave!* (11/10/98). AnimeWorks is releasing *My Fair Masseuse* (9/8/98), *Shinesman* (10/20/98), *Earthian - Angelic Destroyer* (11/10/98) and *Bondage Queen Kate - Galaxy Policewoman* (11/17/98). Central Park Media will release *The Slayers: Volume 8* (10/6/98), *The Heroic Legend of Arslan: Age of Heroes* (10/6/98), "Fobia 2" (10/6/98), *Grave of the Fireflies* (10/6/98), *Ayane's High Kick* (10/6/98), *Revolutionary Girl Utena: Crest of the Rose* (11/3/98), *Nightmare Campus: Volumes 4 & 5* (11/3/98), *Legend of Lemnear* (11/3/98), *The Venus Wars* (11/3/98), *Strange Love* (11/3/98) and *Patlabor: The Mobile Police - The TV Series: Vol-*

ume 3 (11/3/98). The Right Stuf International is releasing a five-tape adult series called *Cool Devices* (11/3/98). Prices vary. Contact individual distributors for information.

Technology

Tools Of The Trade. Pacific

Data Images (PDI) has licensed Alias|Wavefront's compositing software, *Composer*, for use in its computer animation production. This represents a significant outside purchase for the studio, which mainly uses in-house proprietary software. PDI's director of research and development, Ken Pearce explained, "It's often difficult to incorporate off-the-shelf solutions into our proprietary graphics pipeline, but the openness of *Composer* makes it easy to integrate." . . . **Biomechanics** has released a software program called *Nuance*, which is specifically designed to edit captured motion. It allows animators to "tweak" motion-capture data to perfect the animation or "resize" motion by determining a number of frames over which an action will occur. *Nuance* can be used with 3D animation software such as *Maya* and *3D Studio MAX*. The cost is U.S. \$7,495. for a single-seat license. . . .

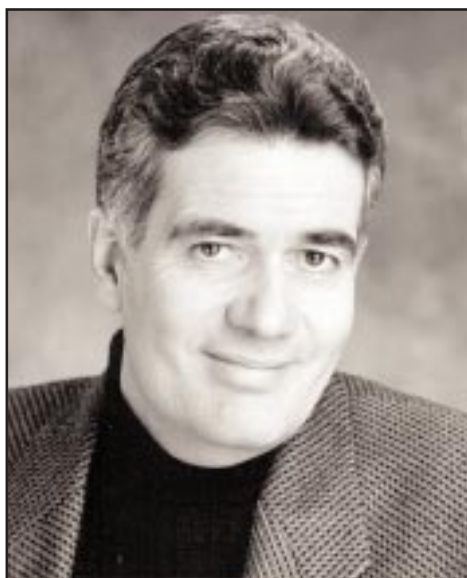
Internet & Interactive

Humongous Debuts Blue's Games. Humongous Entertainment has released the first two CD-Roms based on Nickelodeon's animated/live-action series, *Blue's Clues*. *Blue's ABC Time Activities* is available for U.S. \$19.99 and *Blue's Birthday Adventure* is \$29.99. Both titles are Windows and Macintosh compatible, and feature games and educational activities aimed at 3-6 year-olds. The games are the first releases to come out of an exclusive, five-year worldwide deal with Nickelodeon.

New Girl's Game Has Spice. Coinciding with the U.S. tour of The Spice Girls, Psygnosis has released *Spice World*, a PlayStation console video game. The game, aimed at pre-teen girls, gives users a chance to choreograph dance routines starring animated versions of Ginger, Scary, Baby, Posh and Sporty Spice. While it may not be rocket science, the Spice Girls game does address a need for games designed for girls. *Spice World* for PlayStation is \$35.95.



Spice World, the game. Image courtesy of Psygnosis.



John Canemaker.
Photo courtesy of John Canemaker.

Publications

Info Sought on 9 Old Men. Animation historian John Canemaker is working on his eighth animation history book, titled *Walt Disney's Nine Old Men and the Art of Animation* to be published by Hyperion in 2001. It will contain detailed biographical portraits of Les Clark, Frank Thomas, Ollie Johnston, Marc Davis, Ward Kimball, Milt Kahl, John Lounsbery, Eric Larson and Wolfgang Reitherman. The book will also discuss the early Disney animators who influenced "the Nine," such as Ub Iwerks, Norman Ferguson, Fred Moore, Ham Luske, Vladimir Tytla and Grim Natwick, among others. The author would like to hear from anyone who knew or worked with the above animators, especially family members or animation assistants, students and protégés, who can provide stories, anecdotes, tributes, or biographical information about the Nine Old Men. Please contact John Canemaker at :

john.canemaker@nyu.edu
or phone/fax (212) 874-7462.
Canemaker's latest book, *Hangin'*

Out the Wash: The Art and Artists of Disney Storyboards will be published by Hyperion in the Fall of 1999 and The Museum of Modern Art will present a 20-year retrospective of John Canemaker's independent animated films on November 6, 1998.

Call for Entries

SAS '99 Scheduled. The 11th Society of Animation Studies Conference will be held in Australia for the first time. The conference, to be held in Brisbane in August or October 1999 (exact date to be confirmed), is timed to coincide with the Third Asia Pacific Triennial exhibition of Contemporary Art at the Queensland Art Gallery. The theme of the conference is "Animation: Contexts and Identities," with a focus on Asia Pacific animation. A call for papers and presentation proposals is now open. Proposals should contain a 50-word summary and a 250-word abstract. Deadline for early consideration is November 13, 1998, for reply by December 11. The final deadline for proposals is February 26, 1999, to which replies will be made by March 26. The conference is being organized by Keith Bradbury, a professor at Queensland College of Art. For information, or to submit a proposal, contact him by e-mail at k.bradbury@qca.gu.edu.au, phone (61) 7 3875 3185 or fax (61) 7 3875 3199.

Don't miss Keith Bradbury's review of the 10th SAS Conference in this issue.

Hollywood Shorts, a monthly short film series that presents new shorts and their directors to the Hollywood film community, is seeking submissions. Three shorts,

including one animated film, will be featured each month; the next screenings are October 11, November 15 and December 13, 1998. Each film must be no longer than 40 minutes and the entry fee is \$5 per film. The deadline for the October screening is September 15, however, late entries will be considered for future screenings. For information, contact grifplace@aol.com, or mail submissions to 11166 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601.

Nashville Independent. The Nashville Independent Film Festival (NIFF) (formerly known as Sinking Creek) is accepting submissions for its next edition, June 9-13, 1999. A first prize in the animation category at this festival will qualify your film for Academy Award consideration. Entry fees vary, and the deadline is December 4. The first 100 entries will receive a free pass to the festival. For entry forms and information, visit www.nashvillefilmfestival.org or e-mail niffilm@bellsouth.net.

Worldfest Flagstaff. Worldfest, an independent film festival which has been held in Houston for the past 32 years and additionally in Charleston, South Carolina for the past five years, is moving from Charleston to Flagstaff, Arizona. The first annual Worldfest-Flagstaff International Film Festival will be held November 13-22, 1998. Houston will continue as usual. The wide competition program features eight animation categories and several others, which may accept animated works, such as "computer generated/mixed media." The festival's focus is on independent works which have not yet been picked up for distribution. The entry deadline is Sep-

tember 11 and the fees range per production, from \$45 to \$100. For information and entry forms call (713) 965-9955 or e-mail world-fest@aol.com.

Events

Storyopolis Gets

Gorey. On October 29, 30 and 31, 1998, the Los Angeles-based art gallery and book store, Storyopolis will host "English Soup," a performance featuring six actors and a cast of hand-made puppets, devised and directed by Edward Gorey, followed by "Dramatis Artifacti," a one-month exhibition of original art work and ephemera by the artist. Gorey's macabre drawings were brought to life by animator Derek Lamb for the title sequence for the PBS series *Mystery*. Gorey, a notorious recluse, will not be present at the Storyopolis event, how-

ever, it is a rare opportunity for a close-up look at the artist's work. Reservations are by non-refundable pre-payment only. Tickets are \$15. each. Call (310) 358-2500.

The January 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* includes a Storyopolis article: (<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/2.10/2.10pages/2.10storyopolis.html>).

Imagina '99 in Two Venues. Imagina, a computer conference and festival which is often referred to as the European equivalent to SIGGRAPH, is expanding for its 18th

edition, January 18-22, 1999. In keeping with tradition, the event will start in Monaco, January 18-20, with conferences and panel discussions on the theme "integral images and meta tools", the "Prix Pixel-INA" awards competition and the Innovation Space; then, in Paris, January 20-22, the event will

issue of *Animation World Magazine* was published. These listings are published weekly in the *Animation Flash*, a free newsletter which is distributed by e-mail. Are there animation events going on in your area? Share your regional event news with the international readers of the *Animation Flash*!

Please send announcements to editor@awn.com, at least eight days in advance.

* Wednesday, August 26. Burbank, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation Los Angeles presented "Teaming Up: Artists & Writers in Collaboration," a panel discussion featuring television animation creative teams Sue Rose and Nanatchka Khan (*Pepper Ann*, Disney), Liz Scofield and John McCann (*Animaniacs*, Warner Bros.) and Bill Kopp and Jeff DeGrandis (*Toonsylvania*, DreamWorks). There



Edward Gorey is famous for his macabre stories and dark designs. Image courtesy of Storyopolis.

continue with the exhibition of new industrial developments and technologies.

For information, visit:

www.ima.fr/ina/imagina

Read Stéphane Singier's review, "Imagina '98: Digital Becomes Integral" in the April 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* :

(http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/3.1/3.1pages/3.1singier_eng.html).

Last Month in Animation

The following is a list of events which took place since the last

was also a screening of the stereoscopic computer-animated short *Azimuth* by Staceyjoy Elkin (3D viewing glasses provided). The event was at the Warner Bros. lot in Burbank (Hollywood way entrance). Space is limited and advance RSVP is required. Call (310) 535-3838.

Read a review and view a clip of Staceyjoy Elkin's film, *Azimuth* in the August 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine*:

(<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/3.5/3.5pages/3.5cockman.html>).

* Wednesday, August 26. Burbank, California, U.S.A.

ASIFA-Hollywood presented an evening with animator and educator Jules Engel at 7:30 p.m. The conversation, focusing on Engel's work during the Golden Age of animation in Hollywood, was hosted by Tom Sito, and held at ASIFA-Hollywood's headquarters at 725 South Victory Blvd. (near Alameda) in Burbank. For information and reservations call (818) 842-8330.

* Friday, August 28.

New York City, New York, and Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. Bill Plympton's animated feature film, *I Married a Strange Person* launched its North American theatrical run at two theaters simultaneously: the Anjelika in New York and the NuArt in Los Angeles. The film is being distributed by Lion's Gate Entertainment.

For more showdates and information, visit Bill Plympton's web site in Animation World Network: (<http://www.awn.com/plympton/index.html>).

* Saturday, August 29. Pasadena, California, U.S.A.

The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (ATAS) presented the Creative Arts Emmy Awards in a special show at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium which was taped and televised on the cable network, TV Land, on September 11. This was the first time the Creative Arts Awards, including its craft-specific Emmys such as "outstanding individual achievement in anima-

tion"—were televised.

* Sunday, August 30 - Friday, September 4. San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

Seybold, a conference and exposition of publishing technologies, took place at Moscone Center. Classes covered topics such as "Animation and Video for the Web." On Tuesday, September 1, a keynote speech was given by Steve Jobs, chairman and CEO of Pixar Animation Studios and co-founder and interim CEO of Apple Computer, Inc. For information visit www.seyboldseminars.com.

* Thursday, September 3 - Sunday, September 6. Lake Buena Vista, Florida, U.S.A.

The Disney Institute, a vacation resort, hosted "Mulan: An Animation Experience," a four-day event

which gave guests a hands-on look at the making of the animated feature *Mulan*. The program included animation workshops, appearances by the film's supervising animator Mark Henn, CGI supervisor Eric Guaglione, head of special effects David Tidgwell and voice actress June Foray. For pricing and information, call (800) 496-6337. This event will be repeated September 11-14.

* Thursday, September 3. Melbourne, Australia.

Digital Divas, a networking group for women working in new media, hosted a meeting at Open Channel, 13 Victoria Street,

Fitzroy, Melbourne. Existing members include Kathy Mueller, Kiera Poelsma and Maree Woolley. For information, contact jo@tantomount.com.au.

* Thursday, September 3. Studio City, California, U.S.A.

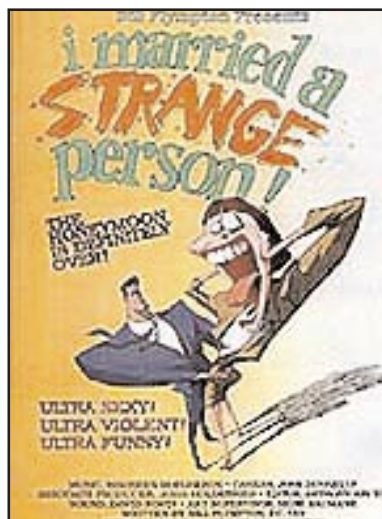
Screenmusic Studios hosted the first meeting of Women In Animation Los Angeles' new Voice Over Group from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Call Muriel Whitaker at (310) 412-2719. Screenmusic Studio is located at 11700 Ventura Boulevard in Studio City.

* Tuesday, September 8. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation Los Angeles hosted a mixer at Lumpy Gravy, the restaurant/gallery co-owned by Gabor Csupo of Klasky Csupo. The event was the second in a series of fundraising animation mixers that will take place on the second Tuesday of every month. The event will feature the original "napkin cartoon" drink special: draw a cartoon on a napkin, get a discount! Lumpy Gravy is located at 7311 Beverly Blvd. For information call (323) 934-9400.

* Wednesday, September 9 - Sunday, September 27. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

The International Festival of Puppet Theater, presented by the Jim Henson Foundation, took place at theaters all around the city. Highlights included performances by the Handspring Puppet Company featuring William Kentridge, and other groups, and exhibits of work by artists such as Janie Geiser. Concurrently, the Guggenheim museum hosted a series of puppet films including work by The Brothers Quay, Jan Svankmajer, Laszlas Starewitch, and others, in addition



Bill Plympton's *I Married a Strange Person* opened in theaters last month. © Bill Plympton.

to an entire program of films by Estonian animators. For information on the festival, visit www.henson.com/festival, and for film series information call (212) 360-4321.

This issue of *Animation World Magazine* includes an article about William Kentridge, independent animator and member of the Handspring Puppet Company.

* Friday, September 11. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

The 50th annual Prime Time Emmy Awards will take place and simultaneously air on the cable network, TV Land. The winner in the animated series category will be included in the next *Animation Flash*.

* Saturday, September 12 - Sunday, September 13. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

The second Los Angeles International Short Film Festival took place at Barnsdall Art Park on Hollywood Boulevard. Animation was featured in two programs on Sunday: the Family Entertainment program at 10:00 a.m. included *Kissing My Brain* by Tanya Hurley, *Salad Bowl* by Michael Blum and *Frieden: The Tree of Peace* by Chau, Hiu Fan (Alina); The Animation program at 12:00 p.m. featured 13 films including *Science Facts* by AMPnyc, *Deviant* by Eoin Clarke, *Knitwits* by Buzzco, *The Third Ticket* by Doug Vitarelli, *Organ Cranker* by John Foulk and *The Devil Went Down to Georgia* by Michael Johnson. For information visit www.lashortsfest.com or call (213) 427-8016.

An article by Alina Chau, director of *Frieden: The Tree of Peace*, is featured in this issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

* Wednesday, September 16. Hollywood, California, U.S.A.

The Short Pictures International Film Festival (SPIFF) hosted a mixer at the Bar Marmont on Sunset, one block west of Crescent Heights. The event began at 7:00 p.m. with special guests including a talent-scouting John Andrews, executive producer at Klasky Csupo Commercials. Valet Parking was \$3.50 and there was no cover charge to attend. For information visit www.spiffest.com.

* Thursday, September 17. Burbank, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation's Writers Group met at ASIFA-Hollywood's Animation Center. This month's topic is "Copyright and Trademark: Protecting Your Idea," with speaker Ronda Dixon, entertainment lawyer and creator of the animated show *Hip House*. Admission was \$10 for WIA L.A. members, \$20 for non-members. Call (818)842-8330 or contact kellie-bea@women.in.animation.org.

* Friday, September 18 -Sunday, September 20. Iowa City, Iowa, U.S.A.

Anime Iowa, a convention for fans of Japanese animation, took place at the Radisson Highlander Inn. For information visit: <http://omocha.shc.uiowa.edu/animeiowa>.

* Saturday, September 19. Northampton, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

The Words & Pictures Museum hosted an appearance and book signing by its founder, Kevin Eastman, co-creator of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. The event kicked off at 10:30 a.m. with a members-only discussion and exhibit tour. For information visit

www.wordsandpictures.org.

* Saturday, September 19. Santa Clarita, California, U.S.A.

The International Center for Gibbon Studies (ICGS) hosted a private event for artists interested in sketching the live animals, presented by Women In Animation Los Angeles. The trip included a lectured tour and a rare opportunity to practice life drawing of more than 30 animals. "Gibbons are fast-moving small primates that are active in the morning and slow down during the afternoon, so the day will satisfy quick sketch to intense study for all artists," said event coordinator Susan Palmer. The cost per person was \$8.00 and pre-paid RSVPs were due by Monday, September 14. Contact taruuk@aol.com.

* Wednesday, September 23. Burbank, California, U.S.A.

ASIFA-Hollywood presented Tom Sito's "An Evening With..." series featuring Lou Scheimer. Scheimer started out as a layout artist on the Paramount *Popeye* series. In 1967 he started Filmation Studios, which produced animated series such as *Fat Albert*, *He-Man* and *The Archies*. The program started at 7:30 p.m. Admission was \$7.00 at the door. For information call (818) 842-8330.

Awards

Hiroshima Top Prize Goes to the Pigeons. The 7th biennial Hiroshima International Animation Festival ended on Monday, August 24 with a grand awards ceremony. The top winners are:

Grand Prize: *The Old Lady and the Pigeons* by Sylvain Chomet (Canada).

Hiroshima Prize: *The Mermaid* by Alexander Petrov (Russia).

Debut (first film) Prize: *Busby* by Anna Henckel-Donners-Marck (Germany).

Renzo Kinoshita Prize: *L'Arène (Série Vermilion)* by Nicolas Jacquet (France).

In addition to the above pre-determined categories, the Hiroshima festival jury also selected 12 special jury prizes. Each jury prize was presented on stage by one of the international jury members, who read the jury's comments on why the film was selected.

Rene Laloux (France) presented a prize to *Geri's Game* by Jan Pinkava (Pixar, U.S.A.) and to the French school, *Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs*.

Katariina Lillquist (Finland) presented a prize to *The Albatross* by Paul Bush (U.K.). She commented, "This special prize is given to a film which is both experimental and ageless. It combines in a very balanced way the feelings of old wooden engravings, deep poetry and touching music. It also has one of the best sound tracks in the competition." Kateriina also presented a prize to *Silence* by Sylvie Bringas and Orly Yadin (U.K.). She said, "The film handles in a very sophisticated way the common traumas of post-war Europe, with the reality of old photographs and a real witness' voice. It has the power of a documentary but by adding in the animated sections it goes deeper into



Locopath by Cristoph Simon (Acme Filmworks, U.S.A.) received a jury prize at the Hiroshima Animation Festival.
Image courtesy of Acme Filmworks.

unconscious minds and ends towards a strong humanistic statement."

Celia Van Dijk (Netherlands) presented a prize to *Pink Doll* by Valentin Olshvang (Russia). She commented, "Among the many animations handling modern family problems, *The Pink Doll* was definitely the best one. The views and actions of the little girl are presented in a down-to-earth way, and the delicate balance between fantasy and reality keeps the audience curious all the way through." Celia also presented a prize to *Trainspotter* by Neville Astley and Jeff Newitt (U.K.). She said, "With this puppet film, you can almost feel the damp air on a platform in the middle of nowhere. The main character is a close relative to Eleanor Rigby in his loneliness and although he manages to enlarge his collection in the end, you can't help but feel sorry for him."

Normand Roger (Canada) presented a prize to *On a Full*

Moon by Lee Whitmore (Australia). He said, "For the sensitivity with which it portrays the heroism of combining parenthood and creativity and in a beautiful film." Normand also presented an award to *Romance of the Heart* by Solweig Von Kleist (France), "for its lyrical animation and design combined with an excellent sound track."

Mark Baker (U.K.) presented a prize to *Spring* by Silke Parzich (Germany). He said, "This prize is awarded the special jury prize for the film's fresh and simple imagery." Mark also presented a prize to *How Wings are Attached to the Backs of Angels* by Craig Welch (Canada). He said, "The jury admired the film's atmosphere of restrained tension."

Hisako Sato (Japan) presented a prize to *Locopath* by Cristoph Simon (Acme Filmworks, U.S.A.). She said, "In this day, young people touch many dangerous things. It's nice that this film makes its point with humor." Hisako also presented an award to *Heavy Stock* by Michael Salkeld (U.K.). She said, "The jury awarded the special prize in recognition of *Heavy Stock's* beautiful graphics. Animation is like the action in the film. This film has an outstanding personality."

Gigi Hu reviews the Hiroshima International Animation Festival in this issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

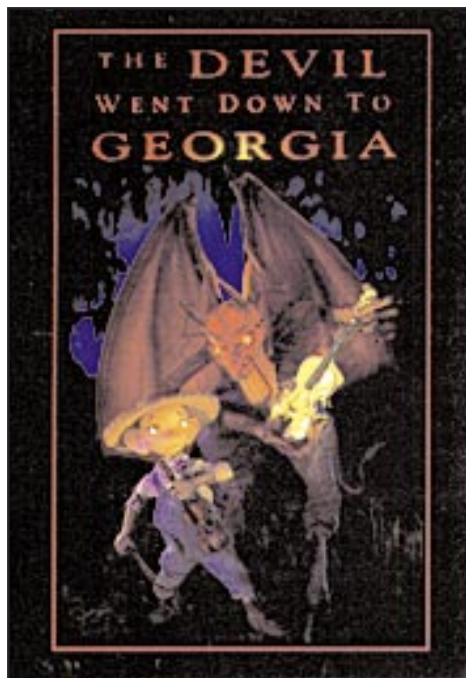
The Simpsons **Nabs 3 Emmys.** Fox's prime-time animated series, *The Simpsons* received three Emmy Awards this year, including the craft categories. For the fifth time ('90, '91, '95, '97), the show won the award for "Outstanding Animated Series (for programming one hour or less)," beating out other nominees *King of the Hill* (Fox), *Cow & Chicken* (Cartoon Network) and *Dexter's Laboratory* (Cartoon Network). *The Simpsons* also won in the "Outstanding Music and Lyrics" category, for the song "You're Checkin' In (A Musical Tribute to the Betty Ford Center)," by composer Alf Clausen and lyricist Ken Keeler. As previously announced, actor Hank Azaria won the "Outstanding Voice-Over Performance" Emmy for his role as "Apu" on *The Simpsons*.

Cartoon D'Or Noms. Every year since 1991, the organization CARTOON, with the support of the MEDIA program of the European Union, selects one short European animated film as the "Cartoon D'Or," or "best European animation film." Nominees are selected from the list of top prize-winning and recommended films from participating European animation festivals: Annecy, Brussels, Cardiff, Espinho, Stuttgart, Utrecht and, new this year, Oslo. The director of the Cartoon D'Or winning film will receive 25,000 ECU (approximately U.S. \$25,000) to spend on a new animation project. This year's nominees are *Famous Fred* by Joanna Quinn (U.K., her third nomination), *Frontière* by Christian Fisher (Germany) and *Maud Graveraux* (France), *Heavy Stock, the Sound of the Railway* by Michael Salkeld (U.K.), *L'Enfant au Grelot* by Jacques-Remy Girerd (France), *Sientje* by Christa

Moesker (Netherlands) and *T.R.A.N.S.I.T.* by Piet Kroon (Netherlands). A winner will be selected at the 1998 Cartoon Forum in Syros, Greece, September 23-27.

The 1998 CARTOON Forum will be reviewed by Marie Beardmore in the November 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine*. Plus, the organization CARTOON was profiled by Heikki Jokinen in the October 1997 issue of *Animation World Magazine* (<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.7/2.7pages/2.7jokinencartoon.html>).

Devil Tops L.A. Shorts Fest. The second Los Angeles International Short Film Festival, held September 11-13, selected Mike Johnson's stop-motion music video *The Devil Went Down to Georgia* as "Best Animation Film." It competed with 12 other animated films in the festival. For information about the festival and the next call for entries, visit : www.lashortsfest.com.



Mike Johnson's *The Devil Went Down to Georgia*. © Fat Cactus Productions.

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DESERT ISLAND SERIES

On A Desert Island With....Commercial Independents

compiled by Wendy Jackson

This month, we picked four animators who manage to balance their work on independent films with their commercial animation careers, and asked each of them what films would they want to have with them if stranded on a desert island. Swedish animator Jonas Odell has directed television ids for the likes of the Swedish Lottery, Locomotion and Cartoon Network. With Stig Bergqvist, he recently made an independent film called *Otto* which is currently making the festival rounds (next stop Ottawa). Steve Box is a director at Aardman Animations in Bristol, England. His short film *Stage Fright* won a British Animation Award and the Children's Jury Prize at Annecy '98. Cynthia Wells recently completed a stint as a commercial director at Rhythm & Hues in Los Angeles and is now focusing solely on her second independent film, *The Shadow of Doubt*. Peter Reynolds is founder and creative director of the Boston-based animation studio, FableVision, which has recently produced commercials for the NBA, and WNBA. Reynolds' short film *The Blue Shoe* is distributed by Link Entertainment and was just picked up for a two-year run in *Spike and Mike's Festival of Animation*.

There are, of course, many other animators who balance independent work with commercial careers. Several of them, in fact, have already participated in *AWM's* Desert Island series. Visit our back issues to read top ten films as selected by Bill Plympton (June 1996), Aleksandra Korejwo (May 1996), Barry Purves (February 1998), and Paul Vester (May 1998).

Jonas Odell's Top Ten:

1. *UBU* by Geoff Dunbar. "A congenial animated version of the play by Alfred Jarry."
2. *King Size Canary* by Tex Avery. "Anything by Avery would do, but this one has its own twisted logic that makes it especially memorable."
3. *Going Equipped* by Peter Lord. "A technically brilliant treatment of a serious subject."
4. Anything by Oskar Fischinger.
5. *Alice* by Jan Svankmajer. "Surrealism never really worked in painting, but in animation it does."
6. *Creature Comforts* by Nick Park.
7. *The Sound of Music* by Phil Mulloy. "Totally without compromise. Disgustingly funny and politically provocative."
8. *The Three Caballeros* (Disney). "No compromise here either, a good alternative if you're not allowed to bring drugs to the island. The last half hour is the ultimate music video."
9. Betty Boop as *Snow White* (Fleischer Bros.). "Again: surrealism does work in animation, here with a little help from Cab Calloway."
10. *Birthday* by Janno Poldma.

Cynthia Wells' Wishes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>The Man Who Planted Trees</i> by Frédéric Back. | 6. <i>The Snowman</i> (TVC). |
| 2. <i>The Mighty River</i> by Frédéric Back. | 7. <i>Moonbird</i> by John and Faith Hubley. |
| 3. Anything done by Richard Williams. | 8. <i>My Neighbor Totoro</i> by Hayao Miyazaki. |
| 4. <i>The Monk and The Fish</i> by Michael Dudok De Wit. | 9. Winsor McCay's collected works. |
| 5. <i>The Beatles' Yellow Submarine</i> by George Dun-
ning. | 10. Caroline Leaf's films. |



DESERT ISLAND SERIES

Steve Box's Best Bets:

"I'm not sure that ten animated films would be my first choice if I was marooned on a desert island, but if it were, these films would provide me with an amazing range of emotions and keep re-proving to me the possibilities of animated filmmaking."

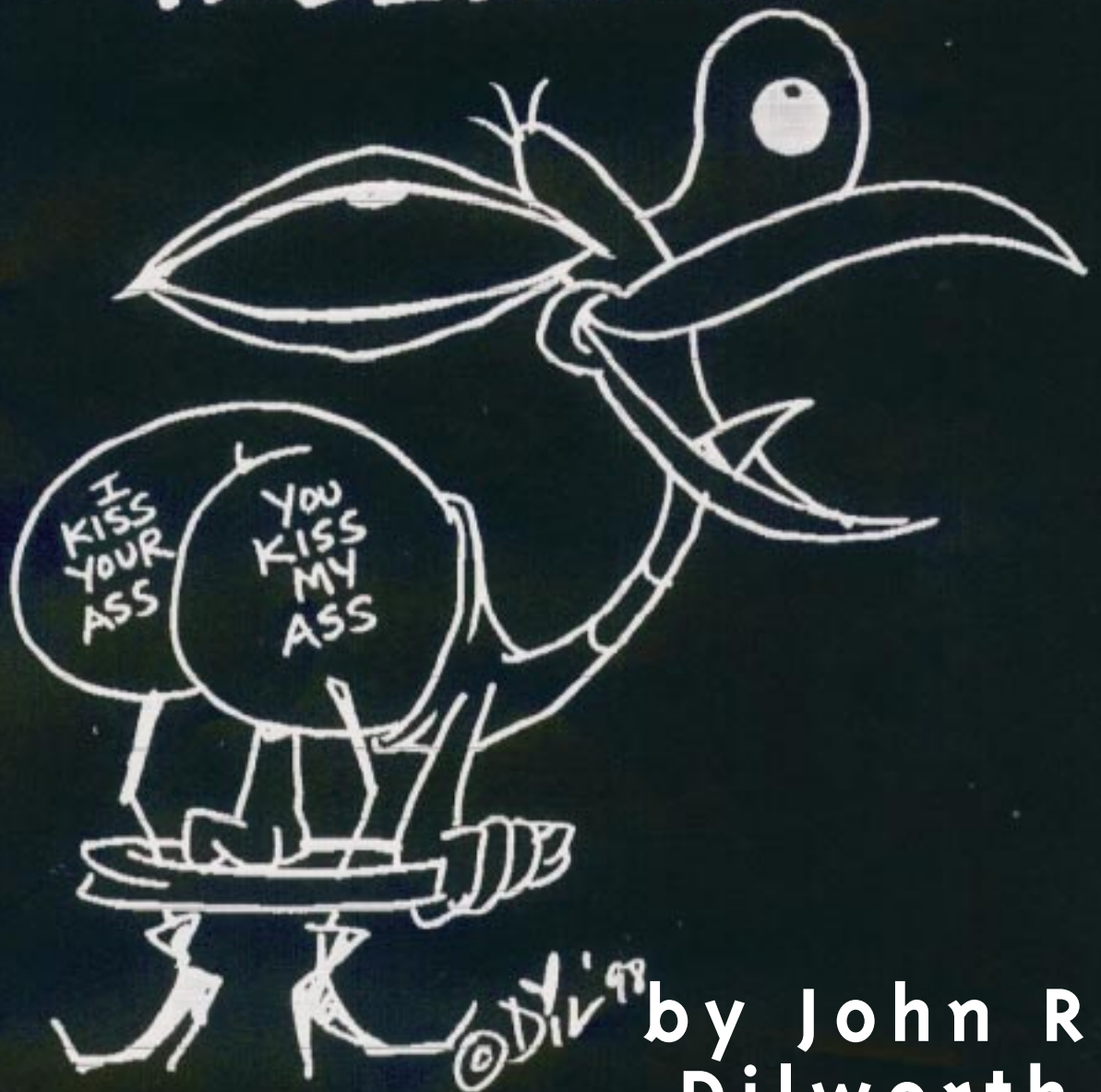
1. *The Big Snit* by Richard Condie. "Actually any Richard Condie film... He's a genius."
2. *Creature Comforts* by Nick Park. "It doesn't matter how many times I see this film or that I know the director. It's a modern masterpiece."
3. *Knick Knack* by John Lasseter. "Perfect use of computer animation is John Lasseter's hallmark, the right tool for the right job. *Toy Story* is also superb."
4. *The Snowman* (TVC). "That bit...when they take off!!"
5. *Tom and Jerry in The Cat Concerto* (MGM). "Apart from being timed to its perfection, I find it slightly surreal compared to other Tom and Jerry films."
6. *Neighbors* by Norman McLaren. "A great moral tale told with unbelievable imagination and humor."
7. *A Christmas Carol* by Richard Williams. "The feel of the animation, the design of the characters and the color scheme perfectly suit this grotesque Dickens classic. It also reminds me of my childhood."
8. *The Clangers* (any episode) by Oliver Postgate and Peter Firmin. "Gentle, imaginative and surreal with the most character-full voice-over ever from Oliver Postgate."
9. *Lucas the Ear of Corn* by Bill Plympton. "I find the naiveté of the animation and the low quality of this film combined with Bill Plympton's sense of humor totally hilarious."
10. *Alice* by Jan Svankmajer. "Epic, unique and inspiring. A true master of animation."

Peter Reynolds' Selections:

1. *Insektors: "Pas de Kadeau pour Noel"* (The Christmas Special) by Renato and George Lacroix, (Fantôme). "Inventive, whimsical, complex and delicious. I sat slack-jawed seeing this the first time at the World Animation Celebration in 1997. A rare gem."
2. *The Point* directed by Fred Wolf. "(Starring the voice of Ringo Starr and the music of Harry Nilson.) Original! Fantastic! And packed with great messages about being great at being who you truly are. A favorite at FableVision Animation Studios!"
3. *Abel's Island* by William Steig, directed by Michael Sporn. "(With the lush voices of Tim Curry and Lionel Jeffries.) Steig's un-careful and inky illustration is lovingly interpreted. A must for a desert ISLAND!! That is what the story is about!"
- 4-6. My Disney Faves: *Snow White*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Mulan*.
7. *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas* by Chuck Jones. "This one changed my life. Every bit of it is magic. Music, animation, backgrounds. Yum! Mr. Jones took a Seuss story and made it even better. THAT is a feat!"
- 8-10. Hayao Miyazaki's *Castle in the Clouds*, *Kiki's Delivery Service* and *My Neighbor Totoro*. "He is truly a master. We love him so much here at FableVision. He really defies traditional pacing, allowing scenes to float gently with no need to layer in music or action. Is it any surprise that Disney doctored the "quiet scenes" in their new release of *Kiki*? I think we all can learn a lot from Miyazaki's gentle storytelling that allows the essence of the story to breathe."

The Dirty Birdy

THE DIRDY BIRDY PRESENTS BOTH
SIDES TO ANIMATION LIVELYHOOD
**COMMERCIAL VS.
INDEPENDENCE**



by John R.
Dilworth

Feature Films and Licensing & Merchandising, November 1998

Just in time for the holiday rush of new animated feature films into theaters, *Animation World Magazine* focuses on this high-profile aspect of animation. We will have an interview with John Lasseter and a profile of his career, written by Michael Lyons. Brad Bird, director of Warner Bros. much-anticipated *The Iron Giant*, will discuss IG Macromedia developments he designed for the film. Chiara Magri will profile *La Lanterna Magica*, Italy's new feature film production. J.B. Kaufman is going to take a deeper, closer look at the characters in Disney's *The Steeplechase*. Plus, Tom Sito is going to look at *The Fox and the Hounds*, a landmark film as Disney's elite old-guard handed their traditions over to a new generation of animation filmmakers. Jennifer Kotler discusses the impact FCC-friendly (educational) shows have on children.

Barry Purves continues his production diary with all of its drama and humor. Plus, we are lucky to have an archive profile this month from La Cinémathèque Québécoise Musée du Cinema. *Animation World* will also feature event reviews of the Ottawa International Animation Festival and Europe's Cartoon Forum. Loris Kramer, vice president of creative affairs for Sony Wonder, will relate her MIPCOM experience and Buzz Potamkin is going to attend and report on a new awards show and conference for advertising to children...The Golden Marbles. Finally, Mark Christiansen will review the new book *Principles of 3-D Computer Animation*.

Animation World Magazine 1998 Calendar

Family Animation and Amusement Parks	(December)
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Year in Review and Year in the Future	(January '99)
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Motion-Capture and Stop-Motion	(February '99)
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Production Technology	(March '99)
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